

# Advanced Dungeons & Dragons<sup>®</sup>

Historical **2<sup>nd</sup> Edition** Reference

## The Crusades

Campaign Sourcebook



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*Knights, your salvation is secure,  
Since God has called you to combat  
The Turks and the Almoravids  
Who have done Him deep dishonor. . . .*

*Over those who follow Louis  
Never will Hell have power,  
Each soul will go to Paradise  
With the angels of our Lord.*

—Anonymous French song  
of the Second Crusade (c. 1145)

The *Crusades* campaign sourcebook is a historical reference for the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game. The material in this book draws from European and Middle Eastern history from the start of the First Crusade in 1095 to the conclusion of the Third, in 1192. Although this setting stands on its own, it can also supplement an existing fantasy campaign. Both players and Dungeon Masters (DMs) can use this book.

When the Crusades were first launched at the end of the 11th century, Western Europe was emerging from a period of cultural stagnation known as the Dark Ages. The Crusades helped the West define a new cultural and religious identity. The Church moderated and redirected the destructive tendencies of barbaric knights, forcing them to serve higher goals. The West's exposure to sophisticated Eastern philosophy, art, and science during the era of the Crusades helped lay the foundations for a new age of cultural rediscovery, the Renaissance. At the same time, confrontation with Islam changed the policies and direction of the Western Church forever, giving birth to a period of religious fanaticism that spawned the terrible Inquisition and the religious wars that ravaged Europe during the Elizabethan era.

The Crusades thus stand at an important crossroads in Western European history, during a period known as the Middle Ages or the medieval era. When the Crusades began,



Western Europe was an agrarian, feudal society dominated in political affairs by a military aristocracy and in religious matters by the Latin Church of Rome. Most of the population lived in rural farming communities. An affluent *bourgeoisie*, or middle class, of merchants and tradesmen was emerging in the towns and cities, but they were still a minority in a society dominated by nobles, priests, and peasants.

The first Crusades joined all of these parts of society in an endeavor to reach, conquer, and hold the Holy Land against the forces of Islam. Despite this beginning, however, later Crusades became increasingly misguided and disastrous. By 1291, the last Christian bastion in the Holy Land fell to the forces of Islam, never to be regained.

This Sourcebook focuses on the first three Crusades, when the future outlook for Outremer (Christian Palestine) seemed brightest. Although early Crusades were often marred by episodes of brutality and religious intolerance, they also produced tales of lofty ideals, courage, chivalry, legendary relics, and divine visitations that are absent from later Crusades. Adventurers could thrive in a strange and alien land, and people fervently believed in the power of miracles and the supernatural.

The historical backdrop of the Crusades is an ideal setting for the AD&D® game. Champions could seek religious relics, establish a rich fiefdom, or explore the mysterious world of Islam. The Crusades provided limitless opportunities for the devout, the strong, and the courageous in all classes of society. It was a time of legends, miracles, and, above all, adventure.

*The Crusades* campaign sourcebook lets gamers run a Crusades campaign in the Holy Land. Though Crusades took place in Spain, Eastern Europe, and even southern France during the same era, this book focuses entirely on Palestine during the 11th-12th centuries.

To make best use of this sourcebook, gamers need the *DUNGEON MASTER*® *Guide*, *Player's Handbook*, and the basic *MONSTROUS MANUAL*™ tome. To heighten the Islamic flavor of the campaign, see the *AL-QADIM*® *Arabian Adventures* rulebook for an invaluable source of Arabian character kits, magic, and campaign ideas. The *MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM*® *AL-QADIM Appendix* includes many monsters with an Arabian flavor appropriate to a Crusades campaign. This book's Chapter 6 ("Magic, Monsters, and the Supernatural") discusses spells from the *Tome of Magic*. Chapter 3, on character creation, reviews kits from the PHBR Handbooks (*The Complete Fighter's Handbook*, *Complete Wizard's Handbook*, and the rest).





*"The fire is not daunted by the quantity of wood to burn."*

—Reynald de Châtillon,  
before the Battle of Hattin, 1187

The Crusades comprise eight major holy wars and countless lesser conflicts from the 9th to 11th centuries. Christians of Western Europe tried to conquer or maintain possession of Jerusalem and the lands of the Bible, held at that time by the forces of Islam. The Franks (western Europeans who were once a part of Charlemagne's empire) captured the Holy Land and established the first Crusader States. These conquerors easily adopted the idea of a holy war, not only because of religious arguments but also because their popular culture and proud history embraced warfare. In the modern age, politics and religion have split into separate issues, but at the time of the Crusades these two aspects of life were inextricably intertwined. Even a nefarious adventurer and opportunist like Reynald de Châtillon could eagerly join a Crusade for both religious and secular reasons: to fight for Christ and also carve out a principality in the Holy Land.

Though there were certainly a few exceptions, the vast majority of the Crusaders were genuinely motivated by religious idealism. They believed that they were fighting a just and holy war, officially sanctioned by the Pope. The terrible hardships of the grim, 3,000-mile journey from Western Europe to Palestine required not only the strongest of religious faiths, but also a considerable amount of material treasure to complete; many knights sold or mortgaged their lands to go. The Crusades were sponsored by the wealthiest members of medieval society—the church and state—for religious, not temporal, gain.

Other AD&D game resources, such as the *Castle Guide*, detail the structure of feudal society in Europe. This chapter provides a Western perspective of the Crusades and out-

lines the theological principles of a Christian holy war, the romantic ideals of the secular knighthood, and the simple aspirations of a common pilgrim. The following sections view the Crusades through Frankish eyes.

### Holy War

The Crusades were not the first European wars against Muslim opponents. The Spanish kings, for instance, had been fighting an interminable war against the Moors since the Saracens captured the Iberian peninsula during the 8th century. Four years before Pope Urban's call to the First Crusade, the Norman adventurer Count Roger I of Hauteville conquered Sicily, which had been under Muslim rule since the 9th century.

When Urban II called for Christendom to take up the cross and liberate the Eastern Church from the "barbarians," he invoked the concept of a holy war. Acting as the successor of St. Peter, and claiming the direct authorization of Christ, the Pope supported the First Crusade like no war before it. Following the example of their spiritual leader, bishops and priests across Europe portrayed the Crusade as an honorable and Christian act of love and liberation.

By the time of the Crusades, the Latin Church had already developed a theological basis for sacred warfare. The devout knights and warriors of Western Europe found a moral justification for violence extremely important, inasmuch as Jesus was clearly a pacifist in word and deed. As recorded in the New Testament, Jesus exhorted his followers to love their enemies and to turn the other cheek when they were attacked. When arrested for heresy and treason, Jesus did not verbally defend himself—he even rebuked one of his own disciples for attacking the authorities with a sword. St. Paul, who spread the religion to the Roman Empire, reaffirmed the pacifistic tenets of Christianity.





The Greek Orthodox Church regarded violence as deplorable and unchristian. During war, Byzantine warriors were forbidden the holy sacraments. The Empire further distanced its citizens from violence by hiring foreign mercenaries for its defense. The Eastern Church had the luxury of developing behind the shield of the powerful and stable Byzantine Empire. The Western Latin Church, however, faced several barbarian invasions during the Dark Ages and developed a theology permitting warfare in order to save itself from extinction.

As early as the 5th century, St. Augustine reasoned that violence was a morally neutral act, shaped by the attacker's intent into a good or evil deed. Violence committed out of anger, hatred, or animosity was sinful and evil. The same violent act, committed in the spirit of Christian love, was morally justified, just as when a father punishes his son for his own good, or when Jesus drove the moneylenders from the temple of Solomon. Although St. Augustine considered a war against Christians wrong, he found a holy war against pagans perfectly justifiable. The Christians, who believed (at first) that the Saracens were all pagans and heathen barbarians, could thus fight a holy war against them.

It is unlikely that most of the knights in Pope Urban II's audience would have understood the convoluted and complex reasoning of St. Augustine. Instead, the Pope appealed to the Norman knights of France in simpler terms that they could understand. Urban spoke of a vendetta, calling on the knights to avenge the dishonor of Christ and the greater family of Christianity. The knights of Europe still clung to their primal views of honor and revenge at the start of the First Crusade, although they were exploring a new identity which embraced both Christianity and the noble values of their antique, warrior heritage.

## The Legacy of Charlemagne

While the clergy pondered theological justifications for violence, the typical knight of the Crusading period looked increasingly to the ancient legends of Charlemagne and Roland for role models. Duke Godfrey de Bouillon of Lorraine, the first ruler of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, could trace his lineage back to Charles the Great, who also made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the Dark Ages. During the First Crusade, Godfrey was careful to trace Charlemagne's intended route to Palestine, following in the footsteps of his legendary forebear. At the time of the First Crusade, a common knight did not look to the romantic ideals of chivalry and courtly love for inspiration; the knights and militant nobility of the late 11th century were only beginning to develop a formalized code of ethics, due mostly to urgent prodding from the Church.

After the disintegration of Charlemagne's empire in the 8th and 9th centuries, the political structure of France fragmented into increasingly small domains and fiefs, each dominated by a strong, centralized family. Knights owed fealty and homage both to their liege lord and to their family. They swore to uphold the family honor, and their lord's, at the cost of their lives. Bloody feuds between noble families were extremely common during this era. These vendettas tended to escalate in an ever-widening cycle of violence and could span many generations. The unfortunate commoners suffered as well, when their plowed fields became a recurring battlefield. Agricultural yields plummeted, and peasants starved.

During this violent time, the Church desperately tried to convince the vengeful knights to adopt more ethical, Christian behavior. The knighthood slowly began to seek a new identity, and looked back in history to the glowing legends of Charlemagne. Around the time of the Crusades, medieval

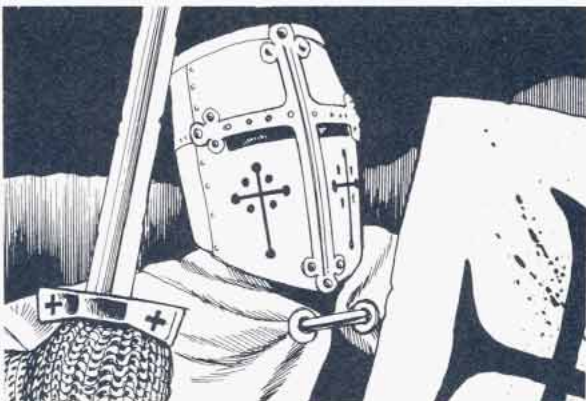




troubadours composed *chansons de geste*, songs of epic feats or heroic deeds about Charlemagne and his legendary Peers, the first paladins.

The *Song of Roland*, composed in Europe just after the fall of Jerusalem, vividly captures both the Crusading mentality and portrays a chivalric ideal that contemporary knights were to admire and emulate. During 778, Charlemagne's rear guard was slaughtered by Gascons and Basques as the emperor withdrew from Spain across the Pyrenees. In the *Song of Roland*, however, the archenemy becomes the Saracens, the hated enemy of the Crusades, and the poem becomes an epic struggle between Christianity and paganism.

The hero of the poem is Roland, a paragon of knightly virtues: *A knight should have such valor, who bears arms and sits astride a good horse. In battle he is strong and fierce, or else he is not worth four pence.* Roland may not be terribly bright, but he is definitively strong and fierce, slaying Saracens by the score on the battlefield with Durendal, a holy sword of terrible destruction. The poet takes great pains to describe how Durendal's hilt is inlaid with Christian relics: *Saint Peter's tooth and some of Saint Basil's blood; some hair from the head of my lord Saint Denis and part of the raiment of the Blessed Virgin.* In the poem, the Archbishop Turpin fights side by side with Roland, *dealing a thousand blows or more* to the Saracens. When the priest's lance shatters, he



takes out his sword, Almace, and continues to hack at Saracens until the tide of infidels finally overcomes him. The *Song of Roland* portrays the union between Christianity and violence, in language that even a dim knight could comprehend.

Though Roland's suicidal bravery in the poem seems reckless and irresponsible from a modern perspective, the Crusades saw far too many examples of this behavior. In 1118, Baldwin I, King of Jerusalem, invaded Egypt—one of the richest, most powerful countries of Islam—with only 216 knights and 400 footmen! The Franks often placed their trust in God and threw caution to the wind. In many pitched battles, the Crusaders fought against impressive odds. Frequently their immovable faith and fanatical determination helped them persevere and triumph on the battlefield. On many other days, their bravery brought disaster.

As we will see in Chapter 6, Lady Eleanor of Aquitaine, and her son, King Richard Lionheart, added the romantic dimensions of artistic grace and courtly love to knighthood during the Second and Third Crusades. Richard displaced Roland as the new paragon of knightly virtues, not simply because of his legendary military prowess but also for his talents at poetry, dancing, singing, and the lute. In Lady Eleanor's tradition of courtly love, a true knight regarded his beloved lady like a porcelain statue and worshiped her from afar. The Crusades played a pivotal role in the transformation of knighthood from a ruthless and vengeful aristocracy into a more noble, religious, and somewhat romantic caste of warriors.

### Land of Milk and Honey

The Crusades affected all elements of Western society. The Church mobilized to morally justify and spread news of the expeditions across all of Europe. The aristocracy embraced a new ethical code, based partly on Church





teachings and partly on the romantic legends of the Carolingian dynasty. The most lowly peasant became a soldier in Christ's army.

From the outset of the crusading movement, Pope Urban made it clear that everyone (except monks) could participate in the liberation of Jerusalem and save the Holy Sepulcher from the Saracens. Pilgrims were as numerous as soldiers on the first crusades. In some cases, such as the ill-fated People's Expedition of 1096, pilgrims even outnumbered soldiers. Impoverished and sponsorless, the majority could not hope to make the long, difficult journey without the constant charity and almsgiving of the aristocracy.

Parish priests and traveling preachers spread news of the Crusade everywhere in Western Europe. The Crusades became extremely popular among the common elements of medieval society, because every member of the Christian community felt as though they could contribute to this glorious cause. Even if they did not make the journey themselves, villagers might pool their resources to send a single member of their tiny hamlet. At the least, they showed generous hospitality to Crusaders who traveled through their village. They donated their wealth to the Military Orders, the defenders of the Holy Land.

By participating in a Crusade, even a humble serf could ensure the eternal salvation of his or her soul. Pilgrims from as far away as England and Norway left the nameless villages of their birth and traveled thousands of miles to a magical and legendary country heralded in the Bible. Unless they came from a large town or city, the majority of pilgrims had never strayed more than a few miles from home. They had no concept of the vast distance separating Europe from Palestine. Despite the hardships and uncertainties of travel, thousands of men and women traveled the entire distance on foot, upholding this holy enterprise.

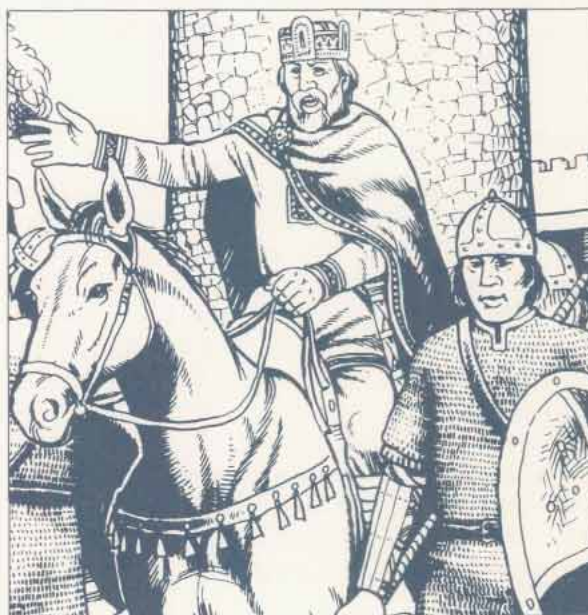
People clearly thought about the Crusades in many ways. Some sought a papal indul-

gence, a document that absolved the bearer from all Earthly sins and crimes.

Others were convinced by secular debates. Some preachers used a feudal argument in favor of the Crusade: Just as serfs were obliged to fight in their lord's service, so too could Christians be called to fight for Christ. Some viewed the Crusade as a feudal obligation to God.

Those living in Europe had difficulty distinguishing between the physical Jerusalem in Palestine and the spiritual capitol proclaimed in the Bible. Many embarked on the Crusades envisioning a rich land of flowing milk and honey, where bread fell from Heaven, far away from the famine, disease, and misery at home. To the naive peasant, the Holy Land of the Bible promised a new beginning for both their spiritual and temporal lives.

Before the expeditions to the Holy Land, Europe was struggling to shake off the stagnation, decay, and destruction of the Dark Ages. With the Crusades Europeans became the Champions of Christendom and the Defenders of the Holy Sepulcher. Perhaps the key to this startling transformation lies in the creation of an archenemy: the Saracens.





*"How dare you slumber in the shade of complacent safety, leading lives as frivolous as garden flowers, while your brothers in Syria have no dwelling place save the saddles of camels and the bellies of vultures? Blood has been spilled! Beautiful young girls have been shamed, and must now hide their sweet faces in their hands! Shall the valorous Arabs resign themselves to insult, and the valiant Persians accept dishonor?"*

—The *qadi* (judge) Abu Sa'ad al-Harawi, audience with the Caliph of Baghdad, 1099

Many accounts of the Crusades either downplay or completely neglect the Islamic perspective on the conflict, focusing entirely on the Frankish plight in Outremer. Europeans had great difficulty in distinguishing between Muslims of Turkish, Arabian, or Moorish lineage. To most Westerners, the Muslims were all heathen Saracens, whether they lived in the Middle East, North Africa, or Spain. They seldom overcame their ignorance, for even after the unprovoked Christian assaults on northern Syria and Palestine, most Muslims rarely encountered these blond, fair-skinned warriors—these *Franj*.

This chapter provides a brief overview of the Islamic world's history, religious beliefs, and political structure at the time of the Crusades.

### Islam

Islam is one of the three great monotheistic religions of the world, along with Judaism and Christianity. The word *islam* literally means "submission"; its followers, the Muslims, submit themselves to the will of *Allah*, the omnipotent God. The first tenet of Islam is that *there is no god but God*. Islam is founded on the monotheistic traditions of Judaism and Christianity, and Muslims regard Allah as identical to the Christian God. In the Book of Genesis, God promised Abraham that He would make his son's progeny into a great nation. Arabs believe

that they are descended from Abraham's son Ishmael, and even today still refer to themselves as the Sons of Abraham.

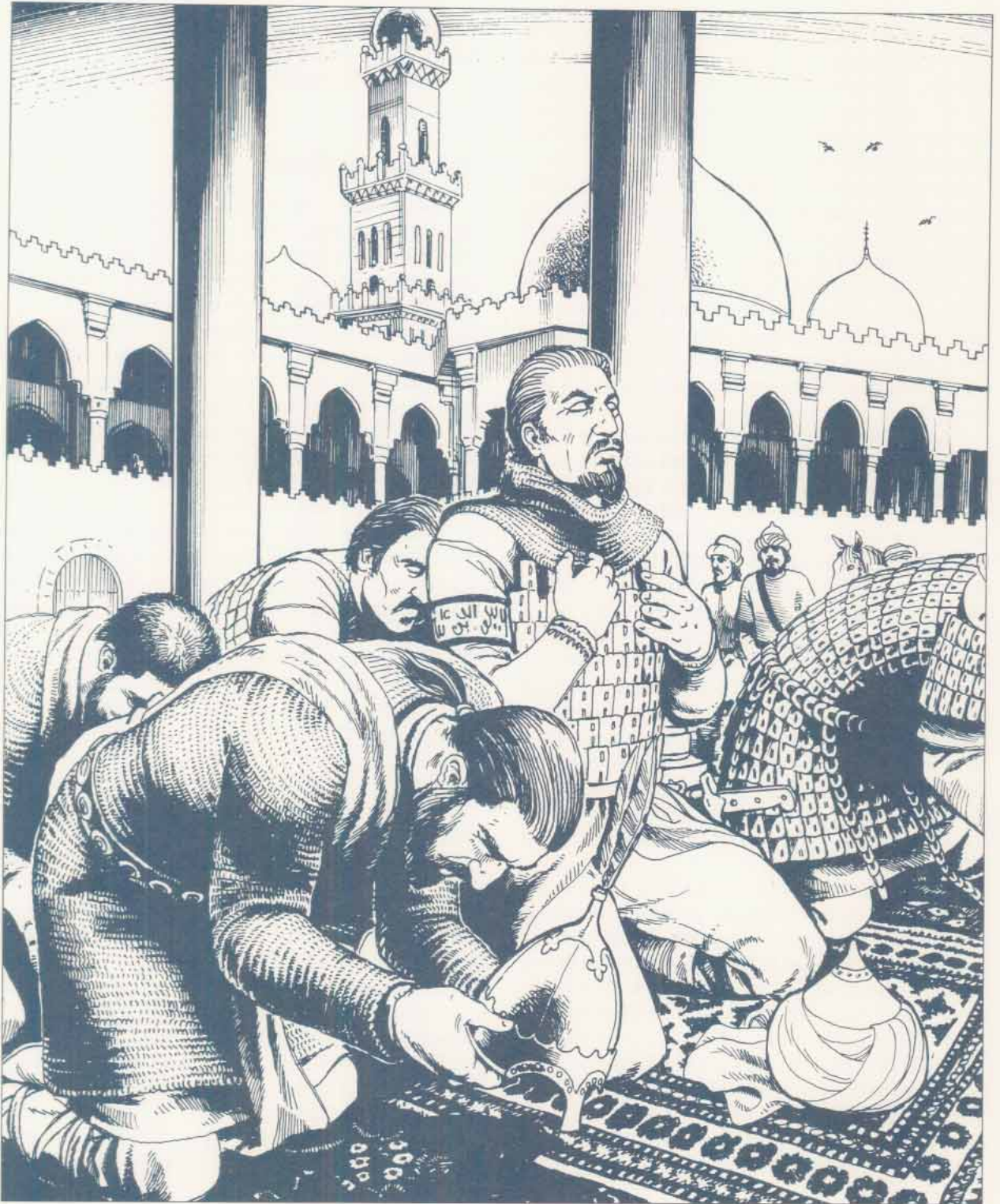
Islam also maintains that *Muhammad is the Prophet of God*. Muhammad ibn Abdullah founded the religion of Islam in the early 7th century A.D. Muslims believe that God contacted Muhammad in a series of overwhelming revelations. The Prophet learned these revelations by heart, and afterward recited them to his followers. During the mid-7th century, Muhammad's literate disciples transcribed these accounts into the *Quran* ("recitation"), the holy book of Islam.

About two centuries after Muhammad's death, his followers compiled accounts of the Prophet's life, including all his words and actions, in a body of work known as the *Sunna* ("the way"). Together with the *Quran*, the *Sunna* forms the foundation of an ethical personal life for a pious Muslim. In addition to guiding the personal life of a Muslim, Islam also provides a complete guide for societal interactions, a body of holy law known as the *Sharia*.

During his life, a pious Muslim should uphold the five Pillars of Faith. The first is a profession of belief. ("There is no god but God, and Muhammad is the Prophet of God.") This is all that Islam requires for official conversion; it does not practice baptism or similar initiatory ceremonies. The second Pillar stipulates that a Muslim should pray five times a day (45 minutes to an hour before dawn, noon, midafternoon, sunset, and nightfall), facing in the direction of the holy city of Mecca. Worshipers must wash their head, hands, and feet before prayer, and they must pray in Arabic. Traditionally the sick, travelers, warriors awaiting battle, and pregnant women are exempt from the obligation to pray.

Other Pillars require the devout Muslim to give alms to the poor on a regular basis (a religious and legal tax called *zakat*, "purification"), and devote the first month of the Mus-









lim lunar calendar (Ramadan, “the scorcher”) to ritual fasting between dawn and sunset. Finally, a Muslim should make a pilgrimage, or *hajj*, to Mecca at least once during his or her life, if personal health, finances, and circumstances allow.

Muslim doctrine forbids idolatry and the consumption of wine and pork; as usually interpreted, the former prohibits artistic representation of living creatures. It details a complete way of life, not just spiritual life but also practical matters such as criminal law, contracts, banking practices, evidence, manners, and deportment. Islam recognizes no distinction between the religious and the secular.

Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem are the three holiest cities of Islam. Muhammad was born in Mecca (c. 570) and lived there until his new religion’s growing political influence gradually drew the antagonism of local authorities. In 622, the Prophet and his followers emigrated to Medina, where Muhammad lived in exile and built an Islamic society free from religious persecution. This exile, or *hijra*, marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar. Muhammad returned to Mecca in 630, under truce with the rulers of the city. When the Meccans broke the terms of their own truce and attacked Muhammad’s followers, the Muslims conquered the city and soon reconsecrated Mecca’s pagan shrines to Islam. The Great Mosque of Mecca became the center of the Muslim faith.

Jerusalem was first considered a holy city to Islam, simply because of its association with the Judaic prophets and Jesus. (Islam recognizes a line of prophets before Muhammad, including Jesus, whom the Muslims revere as “Aysa bin-Miriam.” Muhammad is considered the last and greatest of the prophets.) In 620, Muslims believe that Muhammad flew from Mecca to Jerusalem. From the Rock in the old Jewish Temple, he stepped into Heaven and consulted with Moses and Jesus. Muslims thus consider

Jerusalem to be the third holiest city of Islam (after Mecca and Medina), for its association with Muhammad’s mystical Night Journey.

### The Muslim World

By the time of the Crusades, the Islamic age of conquest in the 8th and 9th centuries had long ago burned itself out. During that time the armies of Islam swept across the Middle East, Persia, North Africa, and Spain. Provinces in this vast empire were ruled by sultans, according to the authority of the Caliph—the descendant of Muhammad and the central political figure of the Islamic World. Perhaps the greatest and most celebrated Caliph during this era was Haroun al-Rashid, immortalized in the fantastic tales of *The Thousand and One Nights*.

By the end of the 11th century, however, the Muslim world was deeply divided. A rival Caliphate had arisen in Egypt, whose descendants were related to Ali ibn Talid, Muhammad’s son-in-law and cousin. The Fatimid Caliphs of Egypt based their rulership on this premise, revolting against the authority of Abu Bakr, the first Caliph of Baghdad. The supporters of the Fatimid Caliphate in Egypt were called *Shi’ah i-Ali* (“the followers of Ali”), or Shi’ites. Supporters the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad were Sunnis, because they (in their view) followed the *Sunna* (“the way”) of Muhammad. These sects were bitter rivals, but their rivalry was political, not religious. Members of both political factions were Muslims, observing the *Quran*, the *Sharia*, and the Pillars of Islam.

Whereas the Fatimid Caliph retained its sovereignty, the Caliph in Baghdad was essentially a puppet of the Turks. The Seljuq tribe of Turks had swept down out of East Asia and conquered much of Persia. In 1055 the Seljuqs captured Baghdad, and in 1071 they decisively crippled the Byzantine army, resulting in the dialogue between the Byzan-





tine emperor and the Pope that spurred the First Crusade.

The Seljuqs converted to Islam and preserved the Caliph in Baghdad, but the chief sultan of the Turks held the true reins of power in the Sunni Muslim world. The Seljuqs allowed the Caliph to retain the symbols of his rank and prestige—the palaces, the respect, the *harim*—but completely excluded him from all political and military decisions. The majestic city of Baghdad slowly fell into ruin and disrepair. Hordes of drunken, Turkish soldiers wandered the city streets by night, contributing to the mounting urban chaos. By the time of the Crusades, the Caliph of Baghdad had become a living symbol of the decay in the Arab world and its irretrievable past glories.

The Turkish princes were generally a cruel and ruthless lot. On gaining power, a Turkish lord quickly sought to exterminate political rivals, who might seek to overthrow him at a later date. Usually this included his late father's *harim*, his half-brothers, and sometimes even his blood relatives. This custom did not foster close relationships between rival princes. Given the brutality of succession battles, the Turks developed the role of *atabeg* to protect and care for a young heir until he reached majority and could fight for himself. Sometimes an *atabeg* refused to relinquish his power, and in this case, the former servant or slave could found his own ruling dynasty.

Although the Sultan of Baghdad theoretically controlled all the Turkish lords in his empire, in reality provinces were practically independent of any centralized authority. In each province the Turkish princes were caught up in their own petty, dynastic squabbles. Barkiyaruq, the Turkish sultan of Baghdad, was no exception; when al-Harawi arrived at Baghdad in 1099 to protest the loss of Jerusalem, the sultan was engaged in battle north of the city, fighting against his own brother Muhammad. During this conflict,

which the Arabs watched with bewildered amusement, Baghdad changed hands between Barkiyaruq and Muhammad eight times in less than three years.

The political situation in Egypt was hardly better. There a corrupt administration of advisors, known as viziers, mismanaged the government under the theoretical authority of the Fatimid Caliph. For years the Egyptian viziers sent massive invasions to reconquer Jerusalem. Each time, the invasion was blunted by too little courage, decisiveness, or proper planning. Though the resources of Egypt were staggering, and it sometimes defeated the *Franj* on the battlefield, the inept government of the Fatimid viziers never reconquered Jerusalem.

During the First Crusade, the major political powers of the Muslim world were either impotent or incompetent. Throughout Syria, Persia, and Anatolia, Turkish princes fought their siblings in constant, bitter feuds. In Baghdad the Turks forced the Abbasid Caliph to withdraw into the perfumed pleasures of his *harim*. The viziers in Egypt bungled the administration and military operations of the Fatimid Caliph. In short, the Muslim world was fragmented, in chaos, and ripe for conquest by the *Franj*.

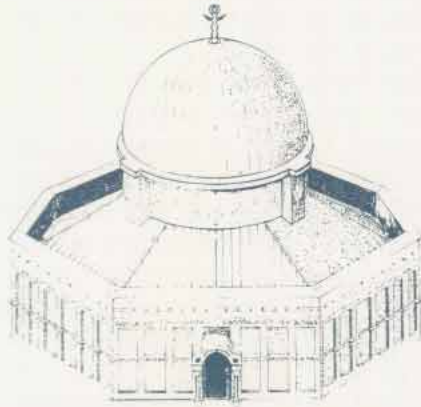
### A Mounting Jihad

In the early 12th century, the Muslim world had largely forgotten about the *jihad*, a religious war fought against the enemies of Islam. The explosive expansion of their religion during the 8th century had faded to a dim memory of greatness. After the fall of Jerusalem, many prominent religious leaders, like *qadi* Abu Sa'ad al-Harawi, tried to convince the Abbasid Caliph to mount a *jihad* against the *Franj* (see this chapter's prefatory quotation). Not until nearly two decades later, however, did the Turkish sultan appoint a prominent military figure, an *atabeg* named Zengi, to deal with the *Franj*.

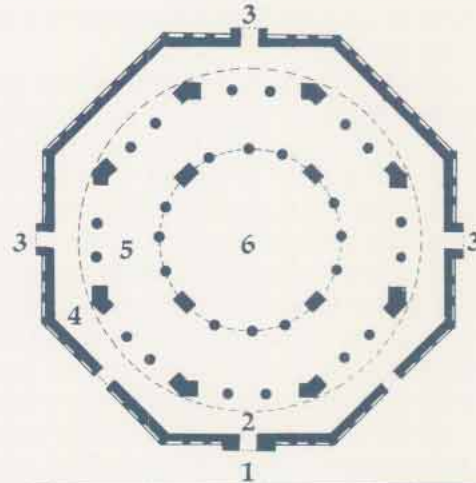




**Map 1: Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem.**



The Dome was built in 691 on the summit of Mount Moriah to commemorate the spot where Muhammad is said to have stepped into Heaven. When the Crusaders conquered Jerusalem, they converted the Dome into a Christian church. Saladin reclaimed the city in 1187 and restored the site to its original function.



**Legend**

- 1. Outer portico
- 2. Main entrance
- 3. Site entrance
- 4. Outer ambulatory (area for walking)
- 5. Inner ambulatory
- 6. Summit of Mount Moriah

After the First Crusade, morale among the Muslims reached its nadir. The *Franj* enjoyed a fearsome reputation among Turks and Arabs alike. Following their spectacular successes at Antioch and Jerusalem, the *Franj* seemed almost unstoppable. They humiliated powerful Egypt on a yearly basis, and they raided enemy lands with impunity. Except for the vassals of Egypt, most of the nearby, terrified Muslim leaders paid them a handsome tribute to secure the peace. Zengi began the long, slow process of reversing this Muslim perception of the *Franj*.

Originally given dominion over the lands surrounding Mosul and Aleppo, Zengi began a campaign against the *Franj* in 1132 with the help of his chief lieutenant, Sawar. Over five years he reduced all important castles along the Edessene frontier and defeated the *Franj* army in pitched battle. In 1144, he captured the city of Edessa and effectively neutralized the first domain established by the Crusaders.

Zengi was the first Muslim leader to stand up to the *Franj* and not only survive, but triumph. He proved that the *Franj* could be stopped. The leadership in Baghdad approved of Zengi's success, and soon a long string of titles preceded his name: *The Emir, the General, the Great, the Just, the Aid of God, the Triumphant, the Unique, the Pillar of Religion, the Cornerstone of Islam . . . Honor of Kings, Supporter of Sultans . . . the Sun of the Deserving . . . Protector of the Prince of the Faithful*. Zengi took delight at this flood of praise, and he insisted that his heralds and scribes use the entire honorific name in his correspondence.

Although Zengi was a great military hero, he was simply too ruthless and cruel in his campaigns against Damascus to motivate his fellow Muslims in a religious war. One drunken night in 1146 he found fault with his personal eunuch, Lulu ("pearl"), and promised to have him executed for incom-





petence. That evening, while Zengi slept in a drunken stupor, Lulu grabbed his master's dagger, stabbed Zengi repeatedly, and fled under cover of darkness.

Zengi's heir, Nur al-Din, and his successor, Saladin, were both extremely pious. They rigidly observed the Sunna and the Pillars of Islam in both their personal and public lives. Each surrounded himself with religious scholars, theologians, and men of learning. In addition, each pursued an active campaign to spread religious fervor and propaganda among his Muslim subjects. With his sterling religious example, Nur al-din began—and his successor, Saladin, cultivated—a religious war, a *jihad*, against the *Franj*. Whereas Zengi could rely only on his own soldiers, the call for *jihad* attracted Muslim soldiers from all across Arabia, Egypt, and Persia. This massive army let Saladin smash the *Franj* at the Battle of Hattin and blunt the force of Richard Lionheart's Third Crusade.

The fire of Saladin's *jihad* burned out in 1193 when he died. The sultan's brother, Saphadin, had no more stomach for war. Once the Lionheart left for Europe, the military might of the *Franj* was effectively neutralized and there was no need for further bloodshed. For the time being, Saphadin believed that peaceful coexistence with the *Franj* was still possible. Many decades later, a *jihad* would finally purge the *Franj* from Syria and Palestine. Until 1291, however, faithful Muslims still shared a small part of their homeland with the *Franj*.

### Arab Culture

Though somewhat lacking in resolve on the battlefield, the Arabs enjoyed a rich cultural tradition that far surpassed that of the comparatively barbarous *Franj*. This section highlights the major differences between Arab and *Franj* culture. For more about this topic, refer to the *AL-QADIM Land of Fate* boxed campaign set, which discusses Arabian city and

desert life in much greater detail.

Intellectually, Arab scientists of the 11th century far surpassed the erudition of western scholars. The Arabs translated the great works of the Greeks and built on this legendary body of knowledge. Arab mathematicians invented algebra, accurately measured the Earth's diameter, and determined the exact length of the year long before Western Europe attempted these feats. Arab alchemists searched for the key to turning base metals into gold while Western witches mixed herbal medicines in cauldrons.

Arab physicians were recognized as the best healers of the world, far surpassing the barbaric barber-surgeons of the West. Though the Franks regarded their Hospital of St. John as a major accomplishment, to the Arabs it was a terrifying charnel house. Once the *Franj* invited an Arab physician to practice in one of their hospitals. The latter treated a knight who had an arrow wound that had begun to fester in his leg. The Arab physician cleaned the wound and placed a poultice to help it drain. The *Franj* doctor, appalled at the treatment, told the knight: "A demon has infected your leg, and it must be exorcised." When the pious knight agreed, orderlies held the unfortunate down while a sturdy young lad brought up a battle axe. They hacked off the infected leg, and the knight died on the spot. After the Arab physician witnessed the *Franj*'s equally horrifying treatment for a head wound, he stopped visiting their hospital and advised his Arab brethren to do likewise.

Finally, the Arabs were astounded by the *Franj*'s treatment of women. No self-respecting Muslim would allow his wife to walk around unveiled in public and talk to other men. According to the *Quran*, a man could have up to four wives, so long as he treated each wife fairly and provided for them equally. Though Arab women enjoyed far greater freedom during the Golden Era of Islam, by the 11th century their position in society had been restricted almost entirely to





the household. This revolved around the *harem*, an inviolable sanctuary where a man kept his wives from the lecherous grasp of others. The *Sharia* had strict laws condemning adulterers: decapitation for the man, death by stoning for the woman. Nevertheless, Muslims guarded their wives very carefully, often appointing eunuchs for this duty.

The contrast of Western and Arab cultures is one of the strongest and most entertaining possibilities of a Crusades campaign. Over a series of adventures with Frankish characters, the DM can transform the Saracens from the standard medieval view of Muslims as two-dimensional heathens into believable and interesting adversaries, perhaps even close allies! On the other hand, the DM can run the Crusades from an Arab perspective, with Muslim characters attempting to understand and defeat the barbarous *Franj*!

### The Assassins

The Assassins were a dangerous and fanatical sect of Shi'ite Muslims during the 11th-12th centuries. Members of this quasi-religious cult supported the Fatimid Caliphate in Egypt and furthered their own political agenda by acts of terrorism and murder. The Assassins ruthlessly eliminated or intimidated their opponents. Even the great Saladin dared not publicly confront them.

The Assassins were founded around 1090 by Hassan ibn al-Sabah, an Arab of great intellect and refined education. According to legend, Hassan enjoyed the company of scholars like Omar Khayyam, a renowned Arab astronomer, mathematician, and poet. When Hassan was born, around 1048, Shi'ism had expanded across the Muslim world from Egypt to include most of Syria. Decades later, after the Seljuq Turks had conquered Baghdad and become supporters of Sunni orthodoxy, Shi'ites quickly grew unpopular outside Egypt. Hassan detested the Seljuqs and the Sunni movement they upheld. In 1071 he

moved to Egypt, the last bastion of Shi'ism. There he witnessed the sad impotency of the Fatimid Dynasty under its viziers.

Hassan completed his religious education in Egypt, and soon he adopted a militant and heretical theology. Like conventional Islam, it held that there had been 11 great Prophets in history, including Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad; but according to Hassan's view, a secret, twelfth Prophet would soon be revealed. The "hidden imam," as this Messianic figure was called, would lead his faithful in a militant revolution, quickly overturning the Seljuq oppressors of the Arab world. Because this cult believed in the coming of a twelfth great Prophet, they were known as the Twelvers. Hassan's followers kept their religious convictions a closely guarded secret, as they were rigorously persecuted by the Seljuq authorities.

Throughout his life, Hassan remained devoted to the idea of reforming the Fatimid Caliphate and destroying the Seljuqs. He established a base of operations in the wilderness near Aleppo by 1090, in an impregnable mountain stronghold called Alamut ("eagle's nest"). Soon, Hassan became known as the "Old Man of the Mountain," and a cloud of secrecy descended on the violent organization. The cult's Seljuq detractors maintained that they used hashish to induce a state of narcotic bliss, which made them fearless in the face of death. The name "Assassin" comes from the Arabic phrase *hashishim*, "users of hashish."

According to Seljuq legend, Hassan would have initiates to his order drugged with hashish and taken to a beautiful secret garden in Alamut, filled with exotic foods and beautiful maidens. When the young initiate awoke, still under the effects of the narcotic, the maidens easily convinced him that he was in a garden of earthly delights in Paradise. Then Hassan would appear and inform the would-be Assassin that only he—the Grand Master, the Old Man of the Mountain—held





the key to the gate of this Garden. The initiate was drugged again (perhaps by a lovely maiden's glass of wine) and returned to his austere chambers elsewhere in the stronghold. On awakening, the Assassin easily became convinced that he had visited Heaven, a wonderful Paradise that awaited him should he perish in the pursuit of the cult's ideals.

Assassins did not fear death. Rather, they welcomed it, for death would bring a return to the Paradise they longed for. Hassan enjoyed near fanatical obedience from his followers. Many decades later, when a Grand Master wanted to impress the *Franj* with the Assassins' fanatical loyalty, he invited a prominent noble to his secluded mountain stronghold. As the horrified *Franj* looked on, the Grand Master ordered his followers to hurl themselves from the highest parapets, one by one, until the *Franj* begged the Old Man of the Mountain to stop the gruesome display. As a gift, the Grand Master promised the *Franj* a favor, should his visitor ever require his services in the future. Of course, the only "favor" a Grand Master could arrange was murder.

The Assassins never realized their goal of reforming the Fatimids, for Saladin deposed the Caliph in Cairo and established the sovereignty of the Sunni majority in Egypt. Thereafter the Assassins spent much of their energy trying to eliminate Saladin. On three separate occasions, Saladin fortuitously avoided the Assassins' blades. Though he gave praise to Allah for his miraculous survival after each incident, Saladin also probably thanked the armorers who fashioned his concealed suit of mail, which he wore to bed every night while campaigning. When opposing the Assassins, even the great Saladin lived in fear.

After the third attempt on his life, Saladin marched his massive army to the Assassin stronghold, determined to raze it to the ground. A few days later, however, Saladin abruptly changed his mind and broke the

siege of his own accord. According to legend, on the night after he besieged Alamut, Saladin awoke after hearing a small noise in this tent. Despite his extensive security precautions, the story goes, Saladin found a poisoned cake on his pillow, along with a threatening note: *You are in our power*. Regardless of what actually happened in the sultan's tent that night (some whispered of a secret truce between Saladin and the Grand Master), after this incident, the Assassins never bothered Saladin again.

As the declared enemies of the Seljuq Sultan in Baghdad, the Assassins were usually on good terms with the *Franj*. Like the Franks, the Assassins opposed all Muslim Sunnites and their leaders as a matter of policy. They sometimes arranged temporary alliances with the *Franj*, and they paid the *Franj* a handsome tribute. Though the Assassins murdered a few Frankish lords in rare, isolated incidents, in general the cult menaced the Seljuq Turks much more than it threatened Christians. Assassins only occasionally eliminated impertinent *Franj*, the fools who insulted or publicly opposed the Assassins—such as the Lord of Tyre, who captured one of their merchant vessels and refused to pay reparations.

Along with the Military Orders, the Assassins were one of the most influential power groups in Outremer (Jerusalem) at the time of the Crusades. Though some members of the Military Orders clearly detested the Assassins and their brutal methods, records of the Templars indicate that they accepted regular tribute from these terrorists. Perhaps the connection between these organizations was closer than can be discerned from historical records. At the least, some kind of truce existed between the holiest orders of Christian chivalry and the infamous Assassins.



*"Where did this valor come from? Whence this power? Indeed from him who is called the Almighty, who does not forget the people who labor for his name's sake."*  
—Fulcher of Chartres, 1100

Vivid and believable characters bring the Crusading period to life. This chapter gives rules and advice for creating memorable non-player characters (NPCs) and player characters (PCs).

Not all traditional character classes and kits are appropriate for every Crusades campaign. As will be discussed in Chapter 5, the level of magic in a campaign strongly affects the availability of player character classes. In historic and legendary campaigns, magic plays a limited and restricted role when compared with standard AD&D game fantasy settings. PCs are barred from most wizard kits, and the powers of priests are greatly reduced. In a fantasy campaign, on the other hand, specialist wizards or even psionicists may appear, but only at the DM's discretion. Druids have no place in a Crusades campaign.

**Table 1:** Appropriate Player Character Classes by Campaign

	Historical	Legendary	Fantasy
Fighter	A	A	A
Paladin	D	A	A
Ranger	DM	A	A
Mage	NA	DM	A
Wizard			
(specialist)	NA	NA	DM
Priest	A	A	A
Druid	NA	NA	NA
Rogue	A	A	A
Bard	NA	DM	A
Psionicist	NA	NA	DM

Key: A = Class Available; NA = Not Available; DM = Class available at the discretion of the Dungeon Master.

### Race and Sex

In a historical or legendary campaign, all player characters should be human. Gamers can loosen this restriction somewhat for a fantasy campaign, but remember: The world is predominantly human and extremely xenophobic. The world religions are dominated by humans who view all other races as a threat. Consider the elf, for instance. In human society, the traditional forest-dwelling elf—or fairie—is a hated race that steals human infants and hides them in their magical realm, leaving behind a horrid and sickly changeling to torment their mothers. Elves are evil monsters, like gnomes and dwarves, completely opposed to human society and all it stands for. From childhood, humans during this era were taught to hate and fear elves, dwarves, and gnomes. Elves steal children. Dwarves and gnomes (like their cousins, trolls) live under bridges and devour helpless travelers. In a Crusades campaign, the rare demihumans are held in contempt and fear by the vast human majority.

Society during the Middle Ages was not only xenophobic, it was incredibly sexist by modern Western standards. Frankish society in Outremer tended to be more egalitarian than Europe, but it was still predominantly a man's world. In the Middle Ages the woman's role was to get married, tend the home, work in the fields (or shop), and raise children. That's about it. Heroic women from this era had to transcend a stultifying, restrictive, female stereotype. During the Crusades, many women surmounted these considerable hurdles to success or notoriety. They helped defend their cities and castles along with their husbands, and they ruled domains while men were away on campaign.

In a historical or legendary campaign setting, women have access to only a few kits. As priests, they may become Hakimas (wise women). As warriors, they may only become





Peasant Heroes or Outlaws. A female rogue may choose between a Bandit, Spy, or Merchant. As a wizard, a woman may be either a Sorceress or a Witch (Sha'ir). These restrictions may be waived in a fantasy campaign, but this may cheapen or (worse yet) completely neglect the historical struggle of women to succeed in a male-dominated society.

### Religion and Culture

Religion was the driving force of the Crusades. If people did not take religion *extremely* seriously, the Crusades would never have begun. Religion governs the kits available to the players. It is not possible, for instance, to role-play a Christian Faris, for instance, or a Muslim Monastic Warrior. In the kit descriptions that follow, religious restrictions follow the kit name in parentheses.

Religious choices are further complicated by factional differences from culture to culture. A Christian PC, for instance, may belong to either the Latin, Greek Orthodox, or Armenian Church (see Chapter 4).

#### TABLE 2 Legend

**Religion:** C=Christian; M=Muslim.

**Sub-Culture/Sect:** F=Frank; I=Italian; B=Byzantine; S=Syrian-Christian; A=Armenian; Su=Sunni; Shi=Shi'ite; T=Turk;

**Sources:** AA=*AL-QADIM Arabian Adventures*; CFH=*Complete Fighter's Handbook*; CTH=*Complete Thief's Handbook*; CBH=*Complete Bard's Handbook*; CPH=*Complete Priest's Handbook*; CCS=*Crusades Campaign Sourcebook*.

**Table 2:** Religious and Cultural Restrictions by Kit

	Religion	Sub-Culture	Source
<b>Priest</b>			
Nobleman	C	F	CPH
Pacifist	C	F,B,S,A	CPH
Peasant	C	F,S,A	CPH
Scholar	C,M	F,Su,Shi	CPH
Moralist	M	Su	AA
Hakima	M	Su	AA
Mystic	C,M	S,A,Su	AA
Warrior Priest	C	F	CCS
<b>Warrior</b>			
Cavalier	C	F,B	CFH
Myrmidon	C	I,B	CFH
Noble Warrior	C	F,B	CFH
Peasant Hero	C	F	CFH
Pirate/Outlaw	C,M	Any	CFH
Askar	C,M	F,Su,Shi	AA
Desert Rider	M	Shi,Su,T	AA
Faris	M	Su	AA
Mamluk	M	Shi,Su	AA
Monastic Warrior	C	F	CCS
<b>Rogue</b>			
Bandit	C,M	Any	CTH
Beggar	C,M	Any	CTH
Buccaneer	C,M	Any	CTH
Scout	C,M	S,A,Su,Shi	CTH
Spy	C,M	S,A,Su,Shi	CTH
Gallant	C	F,B	CBH
Jester	C	F	CBH
Thespian	C	F,B	CBH
Herald	C	F,B,I	CBH
Barber	M	Su,Shi	AA
Holy Slayer	M	Shi	AA
Merchant-Rogue	C,M	I,Su	AA
Pardoner	C	F,I	CCS
<b>Wizard</b>			
Sorcerer	M	Su,Shi	AA
Sha'ir (Witch)	C,M	F,Su,Shi	AA





Characters from Western Europe belong to the Latin Church by default. In Outremer, native Christians belong to either the Greek Orthodox or the Armenian churches. Historically, members of different Christian churches distrusted, resented, or directly opposed each other. Certain kits are only available to a few Christian sub-groups (e.g., warrior priest, monastic warrior).

The Islamic world was much more religiously unified than Christendom at the time of the Crusades. Two political factions—the Sunni and the Shi’ite sects—vied for temporal power, but this did not affect the practice of Islam (see Chapter 2). Only the name of the Caliph mentioned in the prayers changed between a Sunni and a Shi’ite mosque. At the time of the Crusades, the Shi’ite sect was in decline and restricted almost entirely to Egypt. The majority of Muslims belonged to the Sunni sect. A Muslim PC must choose a sect at the start of his career, but this does not limit his selection of kits as it would for a Christian PC.

### Currency and Equipment

During this era, many different forms of currency saw use in both Christian and Muslim societies. In general, the Christian states of Outremer used the *bezant* of the Byzantine Empire. They also used the *dinar* and *dirham* of the Arab world. Use this simplified conversion rate between the gold bezant, gold dinar, and silver dirham: 1 bezant (bz.) ≈ 1 dinar (dr.) = 15 dirhams (dm.)

Typically, conversion rates varied from place to place (the weights of most coins, except the dirham, varied). For simplicity during play, however, assume that these coins have roughly constant value. The dirham and dinar were much smaller than standard AD&D game currency. For instance, 100 dirhams or 80 dinars weighed 1 pound.

Before the conquest of the Holy Land, the Franks were used to currency based almost

entirely on silver coinage. In the East, however, gold was comparatively plentiful. Nevertheless, the gold dinar still had considerable purchasing power. A single gold coin, for instance, could reportedly feed a peasant family for an entire month!

In game terms, the dinar and dirham should have roughly the same purchasing power as the standard AD&D game’s gold and silver pieces. There are no historical equivalents to the platinum and the electrum piece (pp and ep). Copper coinage was not standardized during this period, so the concept of a copper piece is shaky at best. Aside from gold and silver currency, many still bartered to obtain goods.

Not all equipment from the *Player’s Handbook* is appropriate for the Crusades campaign. Some armor and weaponry, such as plate armor and firearms, had not yet been invented by the Crusades. Consult Table 3 for a list of unavailable equipment. If gamers have access to the *AL-QADIM Arabian Adventures* rulebook, its equipment lists more accurately reflect the exotic items available at a Middle Eastern bazaar.

**Table 3:** Unavailable Equipment from *Player’s Handbook*

Tack	plate or brigandine barding
Transport	canoe, carriage, caravel, galleon
Misc.	backpack, crampons, lantern, lock (good), piton, rope (silk), signal whistle, thieves’ picks
Weapons	arquebus, blowgun (barbed dart), hand crossbow, man-catcher, sling bullet, khopesh
Armor	banded mail, brigandine, bronze plate mail, field plate, full plate, hide armor, plate mail, splint mail









## Languages

In a standard AD&D campaign, everyone conveniently speaks Common. In the historical setting of the Crusades, each cultural group has its own written and spoken languages. For the purposes of nonweapon proficiencies, fluency in speaking a language takes one slot, and literacy in that language takes a second slot. Learning languages takes considerable personal investment, but their importance—especially in a culturally diverse setting such as Outremer—is paramount.

**French.** The conquerors of the Holy Land spoke a medieval French dialect which varied by their region of origin. *Langue d'oïel* was spoken in the north of France, *langue d'oc* in the south. At the DM's discretion, these dialects may be treated as different languages. Both of these tongues were spoken in Outremer, but the majority of the Franks spoke the northern dialect. *Langue d'oïel* was the most prevalent Western language spoken in the Holy Land at the time of the Crusades.

**Latin.** Latin was the primary written language of Western Europe. All priests and most scholars learned to read, write, and speak this language, which was invaluable when translating ancient Roman texts and Church writings. Official Church documents were inscribed in Latin, and all religious ceremonies were conducted in this language. But Latin was a dead language, rarely spoken outside scholarly or religious circles.

**Greek.** The Eastern Orthodox Church and the entire Byzantine Empire were based on the ancient Greek language. Though old, Greek was by no means defunct at the time of the Crusades. The language was spoken on the streets of Constantinople by all Byzantines, whom Western Europeans referred to as Greeks.

**Arabic.** This was the unifying written and verbal language of the Arabian peninsula, and once the single language of the Islamic

world. Arabic was not just spoken by Muslims, however. The Syrian-Christian inhabitants of the Holy Land spoke it, and so did the most modern Western scholars.

**Other languages.** Each minority in Outremer spoke (and in some cases wrote) their own language. The most prominent tongues included Armenian, Italian, Turkish, German, and Hebrew. These minorities were often forced to learn other languages to communicate with those outside their cultural community.

## Names

Choosing the proper name is an important part of character creation. In a historical campaign, it can be time-consuming to research appropriate names for the setting. The different Western and Eastern naming traditions make this task more challenging than usual.

In the West, individuals were usually given a single, personal name. Sometimes people were identified by a nickname, such as Richard Lionheart. More often, when people traveled, as they did during the Crusades, they took their country or town of origin as their "proper name." Thus we get names like Godfrey of Lorraine or Bohemund of Taranto.

In Arab society, names were much more complicated. Everyone was given a personal or domestic name, but this was rarely used in public. A full name also included honorific titles and ancestral names. Saladin's full name, for example, was *al-Malik al-Nasir Salah al-Din* ("the king strongly saving the faith") *Abu 'l-Muzaffer* ("the son of Muzaffer") *Yusuf* ("Joseph") *ibn Ayyub ibn Shadi* ("of Ayyub of Shad"). On formal occasions, the name might include an entire list of ancestors. As in the West, nicknames were also used, such as *Qadi al-Fadel*, meaning "the talented judge."





**Table 4: Male Christian Names**

Aaron	Gabriel	Matthew
Absalom	Gauffier	Maurice
Achard	Geoffrey	Michael
Adam	George	Miles
Adhemar	Gerard	Odo
Aimery	Gervase	Paul
Alberic	Gerbold	Peter
Albert	Gilbert	Philip
Alexander	Godfrey	Randulph
Almaric	Gregory	Ralph
Ambroise	Guibert	Raymond
Arnold	Guy	Reynald
Arnulf	Henry	Richard
Baldwin	Hugh	Robert
Balian	Humbert	Roger
Basil	Humphrey	Roupen
Benedict	Isaac	Stephen
Berengar	Jacques	Suger
Bernard	James	Tancred
Bertrand	John	Terence
Bervold	Joscelin	Theodore
Christopher	Joseph	Theophilus
Daimbert	Josias	Thierry
Daniel	Junius	Thomas
Eliand	Kevin	Thoros
Eustace	Lothair	Waleran
Evremar	Louis	Walter
Frederick	Luke	William
Fulk	Martin	Yves

**Table 5: Female Christian Names**

Adela	Elvira	Maria
Agnes	Emma	Margaret
Alberada	Eschiva	Matilda
Alice	Eva	Mellisende
Angela	Eudocia	Morphia
Anna	Euphemia	Nicola
Beatrice	Godvere	Orgillosa
Bertha	Helen	Philippa
Blanche	Heloise	Plaisance
Catherine	Helvis	Richelda
Cecilia	Hodierna	Sibylla
Celia	Ida	Sigelgaita

Constance	Irene	Stephanie
Daphne	Isabella	Thamar
Doda	Juliana	Theodora
Doletta	Lucia	Yolanda
Eleanor	Lucienne	Yvette

**Table 6: Male Muslim Names**

Abdalla	Daud	Makrisi
Abdo	Fakhr	Maroof
Abukir	Ghada	Muhammad
Adil	Habid	Musa
Adnan	Hakim	Mustapha
Ahmad	Ibrahim	Nadan
Akura	Ismail	Nawal
Ali	Jahir	Nurudin
Amer	Jamal	Osman
Anagni	Kairouz	Rustum
Asen	Kamal	Said
Aymar	Kasim	Saleh
Bababdul	Khaizuran	Samer
Baibars	Khalil	Suhail
Bakr	Kior	Talib
Basem	Lesegi	Umar
Bashid	Maaz	Wali
Batul	Mahmud	Yanaki
Bayezit	Majid	Yusef

**Table 7: Female Muslim Names**

Aisha	Khulud	Riqiya
Aleeya	Leyla	Sabah
Amal	Liana	Safia
Anaiz	Mabruk	Shahnaz
Awatef	Manal	Sita
Bilquis	Mauza	Soraya
Dalal	Mawda	Suha
Dunya	Muna	Tahani
Ghusun	Nafoura	Taj
Halida	Najeeya	Tamr
Ibtisam	Nasab	Umm
Jahuar	Nur	Wafa
Jaleela	Perizade	Widad
Japi	Qumasha	Yllani
Kadijah	Raja	Zorah
Kawkab	Reem	Zulieka





## Priest Kits

The Crusades were holy wars, and both Christian and Islamic religious leaders played pivotal roles. In this section, we discuss the role of priests in Christian and Muslim society during the Crusades. With only a few modifications, many kits from the *Complete Priests' Handbook* are perfectly appropriate for a Crusades campaign. The Nobleman, Pacifist, Peasant, and Scholar all make ideal kits for Frankish priests and Islamic religious leaders. If gamers have the *AL-QADIM Arabian Adventures* sourcebook, consider including the Moralists, Hakima, and Mystic as well. Finally, we discuss a kit unique to the Crusading era, the Warrior Priest.

In the official hierarchy of the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches, only men could be ordained priests. Women were barred from all levels of the priesthood, except by entering a nunnery (hardly much adventure in that). Even in a convent, the Mother Superior was technically subordinate to the lowliest ordained priest. Unlike the Christian churches, Islam had no official hierarchy. In the mosques, one of the faithful was chosen to lead the appropriate prayer. Religious leaders, or *mullahs*, did exist at the time, but they were never part of an institutionalized hierarchy. As with the Christian priesthood, Islamic religious leaders and scholars were practically always male.

**Nobleman Priest** (Christian). In the large noble families of Western Europe, the first son inherited the family domain, the second son usually became a cleric, and the third became an adventurer. Pope Urban II, who launched the first Crusade, entered the priesthood for this reason. The Nobleman Priest retains all the aristocratic tastes, luxuries, and affectations of his lineage. On reaching 8th level, a Nobleman Priest would be appointed to one of the newly created parishes and bishoprics throughout the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

**Pacifist Priest** (Christian). Christ was the

Prince of Peace and abhorred violence. Most of the Latin clergy—and the vast majority of the Greek Orthodox priesthood—vigorously embraced this philosophy. The pacifistic Cult of the Virgin Mary, for instance, spread like wildfire across Europe in the 12th century. During the Crusades, many traveling pilgrims, and the healer-priests of the Hospitallers, would typically belong to this kit. These priests wore no armor and never used weapons, even in self-defense. Role-playing a Pacifist Priest in the context of a holy war can be difficult (especially with a combat-intensive party, where the character is reduced to a healer). For the sake of party cohesion, the DM may wish to limit this role only to NPCs.

**Peasant Priest** (Christian). In Europe, each peasant village had its own parish priest, assigned to serve the spiritual needs of his community. Rough, simple, and sympathetic to the needs of his parish, this priest embodied a much different philosophy than that of the Nobleman Priest. During the Crusades, all Latin priests of this kit would have been pilgrims, imported from Europe; Peter the Hermit, who arranged the People's Expedition during the First Crusade, is a classic example of such a cleric. The Peasant Priests of Outremer would have belonged either to the Greek Orthodox (in the Kingdom of Jerusalem) or Armenian Church (near Antioch or Edessa).

**Scholar Priest** (Christian/Muslim). In both Christianity and Islam, priests and *mullahs* were among the best-educated members of society. They were required to read and write at least one modern and one ancient language. In addition to theology, these priests were often experts on history, science, and engineering. Many chroniclers of the Crusades would have belonged to this kit. Both King Richard Lionheart and Saladin retained several Scholar Priests or *mullahs* in their service, to serve as advisors, heralds, and historians.

**Moralist** (Muslim). In the context of the Crusades, Muslim religious leaders with this





kit would have strenuously advocated *jihad*, or religious wars against the Franks. These firebrands sought to incite the common man to take up the holy war. Nur al-din, and his successor, Saladin, supported many religious leaders of this vocation. Christian equivalents of this kit existed, but many probably remained in Europe to gain more volunteers for the armies.

**Hakima** (Muslim). The wise woman with strange, mystic powers is a prominent figure in Arabic legends. Although not a historical role, the Hakima can be important for both legendary and fantasy campaigns.

**Mystic** (Christian/Muslim). Christianity and Islam both have strong mystic traditions. From the 1st century A.D., Christian eremites (hermits) lived in tiny colonies, scattered across the mountains of Lebanon. Hermits embraced the spartan lifestyle of St. John the Baptist, remaining almost exclusively in the wilderness and subsisting on a natural diet of berries, roots, honey, and insects.

Among Muslims, the Sufi mystic tradition, like that of the hermit, embraced a spartan lifestyle. The Sufi sought knowledge, self-awareness, and the almost unattainable goal of perfection through intense meditation, repetitive recitation of the *Quran*, and precise, artistic calligraphy. Sufi Mystics lived in secluded communities near Muslim universities, shrines, or other important religious sites.

**Warrior Priest** (Christian). Unique to the Crusades, members of this fanatical priesthood adopted a militant philosophy to defend Christianity against the perceived evil of the Saracens. These priests not only advocated war, they practiced it themselves, fighting alongside the knights and soldiers during the Crusades. Classic examples of this kit include Bishop Adhemar of Le Puy, the spiritual leader of the First Crusade, and Turpin, the legendary archbishop from the *Song of Roland*.

*Requirements:* Obviously, pacifistic inclina-

tions are antithetical to this priestly vocation. Like all members of the ordained clergy, Warrior Priests swore oaths of celibacy and chastity. Because of the rigors of this kit, they must have minimum Strength 14 and Wisdom 12.

Canon law strictly forbade the shedding of blood by priests. During the Crusades, clerics sometimes abandoned this restriction. The Latin hierarchy permitted this so long as the Warrior Priests fought only against the Saracens, or in a just and holy cause that would benefit all of Christianity: for instance, liberation of the Holy Sepulcher, or recovering a lost holy relic.

Shedding the blood of a fellow Christian, however, remains unthinkable for these clerics. Faced with such a dilemma, the priest must revert to using a blunt weapon, such as a mace or flail. Misuse of violence for personal goals results in an immediate loss of all priestly powers (including spells) until the errant priest has suitably atoned for his misdeed, as determined by the DM.

*Role:* A Warrior Priest is a spiritual leader of the Crusades, responsible for the clerical needs of soldiers and knights in his company. This priest celebrates mass at dawn and before every battle. He discusses tactics with the aristocratic leaders and fights in combat against the Saracens, just like any other brave warrior. This priest has no place in the established hierarchy of the Church. He belongs in an army, military company, or in castles along the frontier, always fighting against the Saracens. A Warrior Priest sees himself as the defender and liberator of Christianity. He is also an ideal member of a Military Order, such as the Templars or the Hospitallers (see Chapter 4).

*Weapon Proficiencies:* Members of this kit may take any weapon allowed to the priest class. In addition, for every six levels they attain, Warrior Priests may choose an additional edged melee weapon, such as the sword, lance, spear, or battle axe. They can





never learn to use an edged missile weapon, such as a bow or crossbow.

*Nonweapon Proficiencies:* Required: read/write (Latin); ancient languages (Latin). Recommended: heraldry, modern languages, riding, singing, weather sense; engineering, religion; armorer, endurance, survival, weaponsmithing. Forbidden: any rogue.

*Equipment:* The Warrior Priest wears only sacramental robes when celebrating mass and performing the daily religious services. On the battlefield, however, he wears the best armor available, along with his vestments.

*Special Benefits:* These characters are effective and respected leaders on the battlefield, and hence gain a +1 bonus to Charisma. In addition, all allies fighting in sight of this cleric gain a bonus to morale and saving throws versus fear, +1 for every six levels of the priest.

*Magical Abilities:* Warrior Priests are allowed spells from the following spheres, subject to the restraints imposed by type of campaign (whether historical, legendary, or fantastic—see Chapter 5):

- Major Access: Combat, Creation, Divination, Elemental, Protection, Summoning, War (from *Tome of Magic*).
- Minor Access: All, Charm, Guardian, Healing, Necromantic, Weather, Sun.
- Forbidden Spheres: all others.

*Granted Powers:* Warrior Priests can turn undead and cast out spirits (see Chapter 5).

*Special Hindrances:* Like Monastic Warriors (see elsewhere), these priests are intolerant fanatics and the declared enemies of all Saracens. From their viewpoint, these evil pagans must all be destroyed or, even better, converted to Christianity at the earliest opportunity. A Warrior Priest never trusts or accepts the word of any Saracen except a convert.

Because of his fanaticism, the Warrior Priest rarely works alongside Saracen allies willingly, unless he is convinced that such a compromise will positively benefit Christianity or Outremer as a whole. Official treaties

with the Saracens are permissible, but only until the army of Christ has gained enough strength to fight them effectively once again. In game terms, this narrow-minded, religious chauvinism results in a -5 penalty on reaction roles with Saracen NPCs and effectively poisons all their long-term relations with Muslims. This greatly restricts their use in campaigns with Muslim PCs; some DMs may wish to use this kit with NPCs only.

*Wealth Options:* Warrior Priests begin play with 3d6×10 gp. Like paladins, they are expected to tithe 10% of their income (gained in battle, adventuring, or inheritance) to a charitable cause, an established Church, or religious institution, such as a monastery or convent (never another PC). Aside from this almsgiving, the priest may keep as much wealth as desired.

## Warrior Kits

Because of a chronic manpower shortage, fighters were always in high demand in the Holy Land. This section reviews the diverse roles of warriors during the Crusades. Many of the kits from the *Complete Fighter's Handbook* are appropriate for this era: the Cavalier, Myrmidon, Noble Warrior, Peasant Hero, and Pirate/Outlaw. From the *AL-QADIM Arabian Adventures* book, consider the Askar, Desert Rider, Faris, and Mamluk kits. Finally, we discuss one new warrior kit unique to this era: the Monastic Warrior.

**Cavalier** (Christian). The Cavalier is a noble knight motivated by the lofty ideals of chivalry and honor. In contrast with the noble warrior, who is primarily interested in furthering his own social standing, the Cavalier devotes his service to more ethical and religious pursuits. This kit should be especially attractive to paladins.

In the campaign, these principled figures are extremely rare. Duke Godfrey of Bouillon, the pious first ruler of Jerusalem, is one of the few role models for this kit from the Crusading era.





**Myrmidon** (Christian). In a Crusades campaign, the Myrmidon—a kit for professional warriors and mercenaries—could originate from either the Byzantine Empire or the Italian city-states.

The Byzantines had one of the largest and best-trained armies in the world, based on the organization of ancient Rome. The Byzantine Empire was so large, however, that their forces were spread thinly along a vast frontier. Byzantine professional soldiers and career warriors acted as emergency reinforcements, scouts, and messengers to the Frankish aristocracy in Outremer. In general, the Franks disliked and mistrusted Byzantine mercenaries, fearing that the emperor desired to annex the Crusader States. To the Franks, all Byzantines were spies.

The Italian cities of Venice, Pisa, and Genoa were an important source of mercenary warriors for the Crusaders. Italian navies helped the Franks capture many of the important ports along the Mediterranean coast. Italian mercenaries rarely worked for the same master long, as their services were extremely expensive. These mercenaries might be hired in any city of Outremer with a large Italian district.

**Noble Warrior** (Christian). The majority of the secular, Frankish aristocracy in Outremer belong to this kit, which requires none of the moral and ethical strictures of the cavalier. These knights are typically motivated by a combination of worldly and religious ideals. On one hand, they hoped to further their personal glory, their own aristocratic holdings, or strengthen the Frankish nobility as a whole, usually by expanding the borders of Outremer and creating new fiefdoms. At the same time, many knights also followed the romantic ideals of chivalry and staunchly defended the Holy Land with their lives. Sadly, these virtues were sometimes lacking in members of the Frankish nobility.

There are many examples of this kit (both good and bad) during the Crusades: Bohe-

mund of Taranto, Baldwin of Bouillon, King Richard Lionheart, and even the rapacious Reynald de Châtillon can all be considered Noble Warriors.

**Peasant Hero** (Christian). The military opportunities for the lower class were quite limited during the Middle Ages. In general, the landed peasantry were forbidden to own or use weapons (it would make rebellion much too easy). In European society, only the militant aristocracy could bear arms. However, the harsh conditions of the Crusades forced many peasants on these military expeditions to either fight for food and survival or perish.

When famine and starvation became common hardships on the first Crusade, some orphaned peasants and common pilgrims banded together. Under the leadership of a self-proclaimed “King” Tafur, these peasants fought with the knights against the Saracens. Perhaps because of their desperation, these Tafurs were among the most feared regiments of the Frankish forces, fighting with almost bestial ferocity. After the Crusades were over, the desperate Frankish aristocracy would have welcomed almost any warrior into their service, perhaps even a Peasant Hero.

**Pirate/Outlaw** (Christian/Muslim). Pirates and outlaws were common during the Crusading era, especially in Outremer. With the shortage of armed forces, the Franks could not patrol the long roads of the kingdom. Muslim bandits, for instance, were a serious menace along the frequently traveled road from Jerusalem to the Mediterranean coast, at Jaffa or Acre.

Not all outlaws during this era preyed on Christians, however. The Christian ports were often filled by friendly pirates (usually from Sicily), who attacked only vessels from Muslim ports. On land, raiding and theft from the neighboring Muslim cities became a lucrative occupation for many adventurers.

Before this kit becomes too appealing, however, it should be mentioned that if an outlaw





was apprehended during this era, the penalties for most crimes were severe and often fatal. At the least, the criminal would be thrown into a disease-ridden dungeon to rot for several years.

**Askar** (Christian/Muslim). The Askar is basically a common civilian soldier. Unlike a peasant hero, the Askar typically belongs to the middle class.

In Islamic society, each city or town drew its own civilian militia—the Askar—only from among its Muslim inhabitants, because Christians were forbidden to bear arms. In times of war this army could defend the city from attack or invade a dangerous neighbor. Askars made up the majority of the common Muslim foot soldiers during the Crusades.

In the Frankish society of Outremer, members of the sergeant class (see Chapter 4) might also belong to this kit. Descended from the Crusaders' foot soldiers who settled in Outremer, the sergeants formed a regular militia for the Crusader States.

**Desert Rider** (Muslim). These mounted warriors are the Bedouins of the arid Arabic peninsula and the deserts surrounding the Nile river valley. These nomadic tribes sometimes made minor raids along the southern border of Outremer, but more often they kept to themselves in their inhospitable homeland. Occasionally, Bedouins would prey on small caravans traveling through their domain.

Members of the Seljuqs of Turks may also belong to this kit. Though they came from the barren steppes of east Asia rather than the desert, the Turks had a strong tradition of mounted combat. Unlike the Bedouins, the Turks had dreams of conquest, and they quickly triumphed over the Arab rulers of Persia and Syria. Though many Seljuqs adopted city life, the majority still embraced their mounted lifestyle. The lightning-swift Turkish cavalry was among the Franks' greatest nemeses.

**Faris** (Muslim). This devout Muslim warrior devotes his entire life to fighting for Islam





in a *jihad* (holy war) against the Franks of Outremer. A student of the *Quran*, this pious fighter lives his life according to the *Sunna* of the Prophet Muhammad. He strictly observes the Pillars of Islam and the *Sharia*, or the holy law. Though these characters fight the Frankish occupation, *Farisan* (especially paladins) pursue the *jihad* as humanely as possible; they spare prisoners who convert to Islam. As the Frankish occupation of Outremer dragged on, many Muslims were attracted to this vocation. The great sultans Nur al-Din and his successor, Saladin, are sterling role models for this kit.

**Mamluk** (Muslim). Muslim society was based in part on institutionalized slavery. Slavery was never hereditary, however, and a slave might earn his freedom through exemplary service to a good master. The Mamluk was a slave trained by the state for war. Though these slaves started as common soldiers, they often rose in rank and stature according to their individual ability and prowess in battle. For instance, most of the powerful viziers of Egypt were slaves, as were many of the Turkish *atabegs*, such as Kerbogha and Zengi.

**Monastic Warrior** (Christian). The Military Orders formed the strong backbone of the Christian military in the Holy Land. Like the Warrior Priest, which combines the roles of cleric and fighter, the Monastic Warrior combines the roles of fighter and monk. These fighters embraced a strict monastic lifestyle and devoted their existence to fighting the Saracens.

A warrior of this kit may belong to either the Order of the Temple (as a Templar) or the Order of Saint John (as a Hospitaller). These two Orders are detailed in Chapter 4.

**Requirements:** The Monastic Warrior takes the Benedictine vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. The Hospitallers emphasize charitable deeds and healing, and so Hospitaller PCs must be of lawful good alignment. The Templars stress obedient service, and so Tem-

plar PCs may be either lawful good or lawful neutral. All Monastic Warriors must have minimum 12 Strength, 12 Wisdom, and 12 Constitution.

**Role:** Each Military Order was founded for a different, specific purpose. The Templars began by protecting pilgrims along the highway to Jerusalem. The Hospitallers operated a hospital for impoverished pilgrims before they became a Military Order. Eventually the Orders became devoted to defending the Holy Land. The Hospitallers, however, retained their focus on good works and charity even after they assumed full military responsibilities throughout Outremer.

The Military Orders fell outside the authority of the local secular and religious leaders and answered directly to the Pope. Nevertheless, the rulers of Outremer made generous donations of lands and castles to the Templars and Hospitallers, knowing that these Orders would defend them properly.

Each Order is organized along a separate, strict chain of command. Experience level is considered to be equivalent to the warrior's direct rank within the Military Order's hierarchy. A lower-level (and therefore lower-ranking) Templar is expected to follow a superior's orders without question (see Special Hindrances below). Warriors of 1st-4th level are *sergeants*; those of 5th level and above are *knights*; the highest-level warrior of an Order is the *Grand Master*. Clerics also joined Military Orders (see Chapter 4). A priest's rank within the organization is also determined by level.

**Weapon Proficiencies:** Required: sword (long or bastard) and lance (medium or heavy); Recommended: all swords and lances, mace (both types), morning star, flail (both types), spear, dagger, battle axe. Forbidden: crossbow.

**Nonweapon Proficiencies:** Required: healing (Hospitallers) or any two modern languages (Templars); by 5th level, all Monastic Warriors must learn riding (land-based). Recom-





mended: animal handling, blacksmithing, cooking, direction sense, etiquette, heraldry, modern languages, singing, weather sense; ancient history, engineering, healing, herbalism, local history, read/write, religion, spellcraft; animal lore, armorer, blind fighting, endurance, hunting, survival, tracking, weaponsmithing. Forbidden: Any rogue.

**Equipment:** The Military Orders are among the best-equipped warriors in the Holy Land. They may use their personal wealth to purchase arms, armor, and equipment as they see fit, donating all excess money to the Military Order (see "Wealth Options"). Each Order provides the following for its brethren:

- **Horses:** At 1st level, the warrior may obtain a riding horse. At 3rd level, the Order also provides a light war horse, and at 7th level, the Order further provides a heavy war horse. If any of these steeds are lost or slain, they are not replaced until the warrior has reached the next level. A warrior may never own more than four horses.
- **Arms and Armor:** At 1st level, the Order provides a sword of the fighter's choice. At 3rd level, the warrior receives a full suit of chain mail, a great helm, and a medium shield, unless he has already obtained these items. This equipment may be replaced from the Order's armory if lost or damaged, once per level. The warrior may never own more than four suits of armor or weapons of the same type.
- **Magical Items:** In a legendary or fantasy campaign, subject to the DM's approval, the Warrior Priests of the Order can provide enchanted weapons and armor to high-ranking members, after they reach 5th level, to help them better combat the Saracens—5th level: *sword +1*; 6th level: *chain mail +1*; 7th level: *shield +1*; 8th level: *sword +2*; 9th level: *chain mail +2*; 10th level: *shield +2*. The Grand Master of the Order may adjust rewards for especially deserving warriors.

**Special Benefits:** The Monastic Warrior need never worry about food or lodging while in

Christian territory. Even if an outpost of the Order is not located nearby, the grateful people gladly donate what they can for their pious defender.

These warriors are the scourge of the Saracens. Because of their training and fanatic zeal, Templars and Hospitallers gain a +1 bonus to hit and damage when fighting a Saracen opponent with a melee weapon. Monastic Warriors also gain a +1 on saving throws against Saracen attacks.

Furthermore, as a member of an extensive and disciplined military organization, a Templar or Hospitaller PC can give an order to a subordinate and expect it to be obeyed. (Note that a Templar has absolutely no jurisdiction over a Hospitaller, however, nor vice versa. These rival factions may respect each other, but not *that* much.) Within his own organization, a Monastic Warrior has authority over those of three levels lower than himself. For instance, at 4th level, a Templar can command 1st-level initiates.

The Templars, in particular, take their vow of obedience *extremely* seriously. Orders given to a subordinate NPC are followed immediately and without question. The Templars are taught to obey reasonable orders—such as carrying messages, summoning reinforcements, and tending to the wounded—as well as dangerous or even life-threatening orders. NPCs typically follow orders to protect a person or defend a stronghold against the Saracens *to the death* unless they receive an order from a superior to withdraw or surrender. The Hospitallers behave as Templars do, except when an order obviously conflicts with their alignment.

**Special Hindrances:** Members of this kit are expected to obey orders themselves, immediately and without question, when delivered by a superior (a warrior of three or more levels higher than the PC). Obviously, the PC can always decide whether or not to follow the orders of a superior, but failure to comply results in an immediate trial before the Grand





Master. For a minor infraction, unless the PC can give a compelling reason for the deliberate misconduct, he is stripped of his privileges (including magical items) and ejected from the Order. Punishment for a serious crime, like desertion (or, even worse, conversion to Islam) is death, meted out at the earliest opportunity by other members of the Order.

Like the Warrior Priest, the Monastic Warrior is the unfaltering enemy of the Saracen. Amiable relations with the enemy are impossible, so long as they pose a threat to the Holy Land. Their fanaticism results in a -5 penalty on reaction rolls involving Muslim NPCs. This greatly restricts their use in campaigns with Muslim PCs; some DMs may wish to use this kit with NPCs only.

*Wealth Options:* Monastic Warriors begin play with the usual 5d4x10 gp. In keeping with their vow of poverty, these warriors keep no personal wealth whatever. Aside from sufficient funds to purchase and maintain equipment, they must donate all excess wealth to the Order for its charitable duties, maintenance, and upkeep.

## Rogue Kits

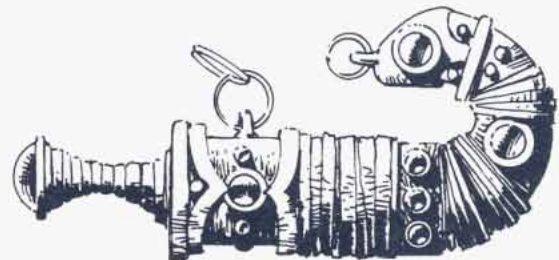
There have always been rogues throughout history, and the Crusades were no exception. This section reviews the types of rogues available during the campaign. Some of the kits from the *Complete Thief's Handbook* are appropriate for this era: Bandit, Beggar, Buccaneer, Scout, and Spy. Many kits from the *Complete Bard's Handbook* are also appropriate: Gallant, Herald, Jester, and Thespian. From the *AL-QADIM Arabian Adventures* rulebook, consider the Barber, Holy Slayer, and the Merchant-Rogue. Finally, we introduce a specialized charlatan of the Middle Ages, the Pardoner.

**Bandit and Buccaneer** (Christian/Muslim). These rogues play the same historical role in medieval society as the Warrior Pirate/Outlaw kit.

**Beggar** (Christian/Muslim). Almsgiving played an important role in both Christian and Muslim societies during the Middle Ages, especially during the Crusades. Religious institutions of Outremer donated alms and food to the poor on a regular basis. In Muslim society, almsgiving and assistance to the poor was one of the Pillars of Islam. Within this charitable atmosphere, a professional class of beggars thrived, content to live off the alms of the religious faithful.

**Scout** (Christian/Muslim). The Turks and Arabs recognized the importance of effective scouting in their military. Their armies always included a group of scouts, drawn from the local Christian or Muslim population, who could guide small patrols, help set ambushes for the enemy, and act as messengers. The Franks used an entirely different strategy on the march to safeguard their militia, dividing their forces into a vanguard, main army, and a rear guard. The Crusaders rarely trusted the security of their armies to a group of local guides and scouts, who might be spies for the enemy. After a generation in Outremer, however, many Frankish lords would probably have employed local scouts and messengers.

**Spy** (Christian/Muslim). The Turkish and Arab leaders employed spies extensively throughout the Crusades. Although some spies were forced into their profession by blackmail or other insidious means, many Muslim leaders relied on professionals. The







*atabeg* Zengi, for instance, employed a courtesan in Acre to spy on Frankish developments in that city. Zengi and his successors developed an extensive spy network throughout the Frankish cities of Outremer. When the *atabeg's* spies informed him that the Franks were weak, he marshaled his army and attacked. When the spies told him that the Franks were assembling their forces for an assault, Zengi often knew when and where to intercept them.

In the campaign, only Muslims or local Christians can belong to this kit. The Franks themselves made poor spies, for with their fair complexion, blond hair, and blue eyes they could never infiltrate Muslim society. Eventually, the Franks recognized the need for spies in their service, but they almost always employed local Christians in this capacity.

**Gallant, Jester, Thespian** (Christian). Unlike the first austere expedition to the Holy Land, the Second Crusade included troubadours and poets. Most noble lords brought along their entire personal court, including entertainers and wives. On the Third Crusade, Richard the Lionheart brought his personal jester along to the Holy Land. The rulers of Outremer undoubtedly also employed entertainers in their service. Lavish feasts, jousts, and extravagant public celebrations were quite common in the Holy Land. In the campaign, only Franks and those of European descent can belong to these kits.

**Herald** (Christian). Frankish leaders considered the conquest and establishment of Christian states in the Holy Land a historical undertaking. Starting with the First Crusade, the aristocracy employed historians and scholars to record the heroic words and deeds of the Crusaders. As with the other bardic kits, only Franks and those of European descent can adopt this profession.

**Barber** (Muslim). Barbers were a common fixture of Muslim society, which strongly valued personal hygiene and cleanliness. In

addition to their usual duties, barbers often offered simple medical services to their customers. In the *Arabian Nights* folktales, barbers were also adept storytellers, astrologers, and adventurers.

**Holy Slayer** (Muslim). The infamous Assassins were a dangerous terrorist group during the era of the Crusades (see Chapter 2 for the organization's history and background). To the mainstream Sunni Muslim society, the Assassins were mysterious, fanatical murderers. Christians realized this as well, but nonetheless accepted their presence in Outremer. Only Shi'ite Muslims can belong to this kit. Because Assassins represent a negative, destructive force, the DM should strongly consider limiting the role of Assassins to NPCs in the campaign.

**Merchant-Rogue** (Christian/Muslim). Merchants were numerous in Muslim society and operated far-flung trading empires extending throughout Persia, North Africa, Spain, India, and the distant islands of Indonesia. The mercantile city-states of Italy established their own trading dominions in the Holy Land. These adventurous traders put aside their religious differences to expand their lucrative enterprises. When the Crusader States made war with their Muslim neighbors, the flow of trade might slow down temporarily, but it never stopped. Both Christian and Muslim rulers realized that merchants were vital for a prosperous economy.

**Pardoner** (Christian). A Pardoner poses as a priest or prophet to prey on the charity and faith of devout Christians. At a time when miracles and holy relics were commonplace, there was no way to prove that a bit of bone actually came from any given saint. Everyone knew that relics were powerless unless the owner had faith in their divine power. During the era of the Crusades, as we have seen, Christians had an abundance of faith. By the 13th century, these charlatans were a standard fixture of Medieval European life, offer-





ing everyone a holy relic or absolution from their sins—for the right price, of course. For inspiration for this kit, see Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.

**Requirements:** Franks and Europeans—but not local Christians—may adopt this kit as either rogues or bards. Because this profession demands some background in religion and the practices of the Latin Church, the Pardoner must have Intelligence 13 and Charisma 15 (minimum for bards).

Pardoners are neutral or evil. Those of good alignment would never tolerate the constant hypocrisy required for this profession. Because this kit might promote strife within an adventuring group (and thus shorten the PC's life span), it is best played as neutral with a strong dose of humor, or kept as NPCs only.

**Role:** Outwardly, the Pardoner serves the Church as a reverent collector of alms, charity for the poor. Depending on his background, sophistication, and audience, he may appear a pious citizen, a priest, a monk, or even a member of a Military Order. He can quote scripture and the Canon of the Church with the fervor of a prophet, but the Pardoner's piety is only a clever facade. Through his knowledge of religion, he manipulates the faith of pious Christians for his own monetary gain.

For a suitable donation, this rogue can provide any Christian with an indulgence signed by the Pope, or a multitude of holy relics, each accompanied by a certificate of authenticity. Though he claims that any donations will support the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the Hospitaller's Orphanage in Jerusalem, or some other charitable institution—in reality, all contributions go directly into the Pardoner's velvet-lined pocket.

**Weapon Proficiencies:** The Pardoner may learn any weapon appropriate for his disguise. While posing as a priest, he may use a mace or a staff. As an agent of the Hospitallers, he might carry a sword.

**Nonweapon Proficiencies:** Required: modern languages (Latin), read/write (Latin), religion. Recommended: etiquette; ancient history, astrology, local history; appraising, disguise, forgery, reading lips, ventriloquism. Forbidden: None.

**Equipment:** As with his weapon proficiencies, the Pardoner's current role determines his equipment. While posing as a priest, for instance, he would make sure to keep his copied or stolen vestments neat and authentic. All-important props, such as a Bible and crucifix, complete the charlatan's disguise.

**Special Benefits:** The Pardoner may choose nonweapon proficiencies available to priests with no penalty. His primary skill, however, is the ability to *elicit donations*. The rogue's ability is based on his percentage chance to pick pockets, modified by his loyalty base (up to +8% for 18 Charisma). Dexterity bonuses that apply to picking pockets never affect the chance to elicit donations. Those seeking to elicit more than a few dirhams per contributor incur penalties (-10% if eliciting 1-10 dinars; -25% if seeking a larger donation).

The Pardoner's ability in this skill can never exceed 95% (including bonuses). As with the picking-pockets ability check, the DM decides the maximum amount a contributor can afford to donate; obviously, a Pardoner cannot extract a 25 gp donation from a peasant, regardless of his eloquence. For each level of ability, the Pardoner can locate and solicit from one likely contributor during each day.

**Special Hindrances:** The Pardoner is a wanderer, traveling from town to town before the local secular and religious authorities learn of his solicitations. He must approach a true cleric with caution, however, as any ordained priest of 4th level or higher can pierce the Pardoner's religious facade with a successful Wisdom check.

**Wealth Options:** The Pardoner embarks on his career with the customary 2d6×10 gp.





## Wizard Kits

Few wizard kits are available for the Crusades campaign. No kits from the *Complete Wizard's Handbook* are appropriate. From the *AL-QADIM Arabian Adventures* book, use the Sorcerer and Sha'ir kits.

The biggest hindrance for wizards is the social stigma associated with their profession. Because of a small minority's foul practices, the Church has labeled the entire profession heretical. In Christian society, all wizards, regardless of alignment, must keep their true calling secret from NPC priests, or become subject to cruel persecution, imprisonment, and execution. (Priest player characters presumably recognize that wizard PCs are worthy people.) Muslim society is not as intolerant to beneficial or neutral sorcery, but its religious and secular authorities still vigorously persecute practitioners of "black magic."

**Sorcerer** (Muslim). The idea of a scholar mage, who practiced a kind of "sorcery of science," was almost unknown in the West during the Middle Ages. The concept of the Renaissance magus would not evolve in Europe for a few hundred years. In Arabia, however, scientists had practiced a form of scholarly magic for centuries. Use the dark and mysterious wizards from the *Arabian Nights* as inspiration for these feared spellcasters.

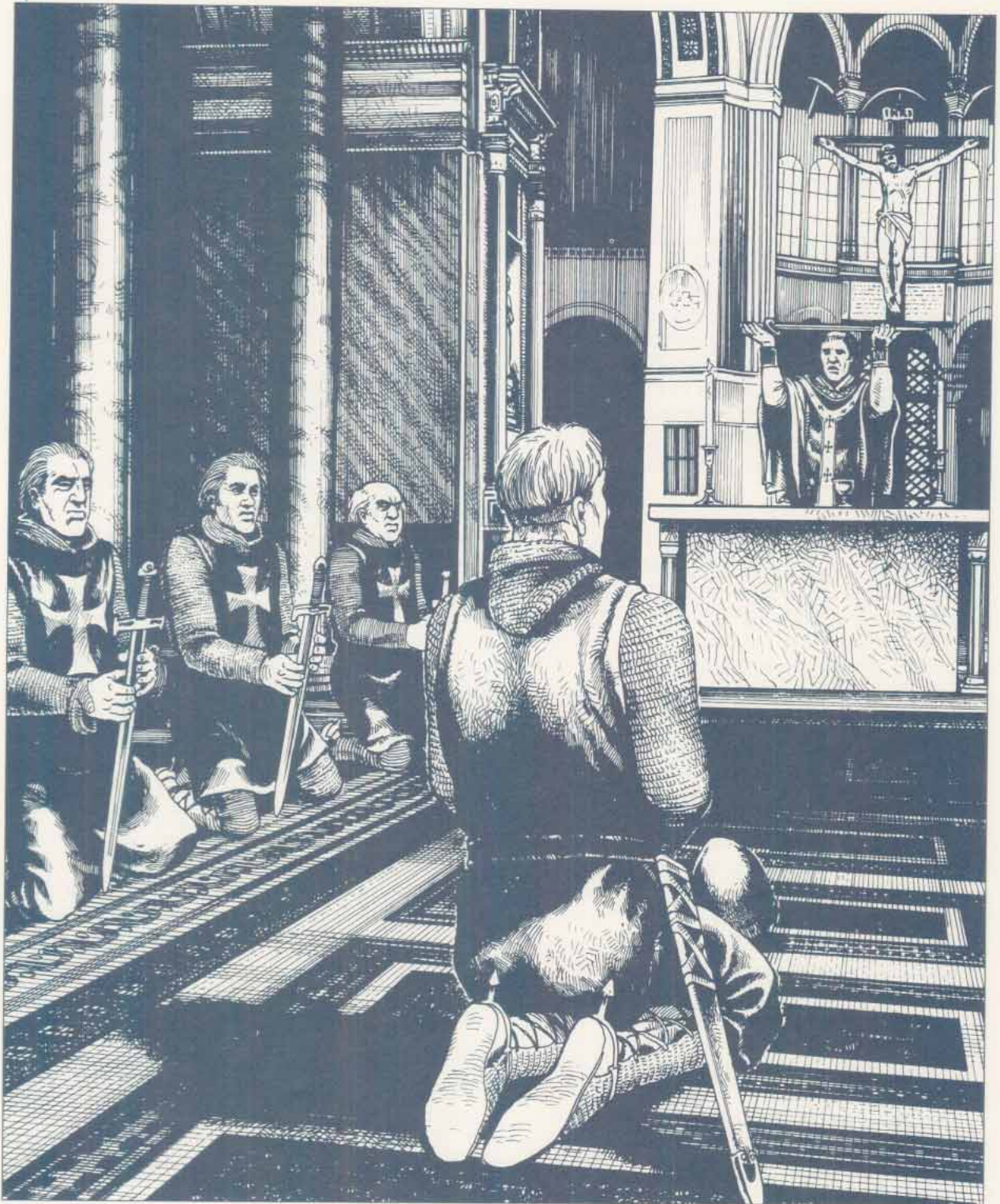
**Sha'ir** (Christian/Muslim). Because women were barred from the priesthood and the warrior elite in Western Europe, many devoted their lives to the practice of magic, especially in rural villages. The Sha'ir differs from a scholarly mage, who relies on books for his magic. Instead, this type of wizard draws upon the supernatural powers of an invisible spirit world with the help of her familiar. Throughout Western Europe, where the practice of magic is generally restricted to women, a Sha'ir is generally called a witch.

In the Crusades campaign, a Sha'ir or Witch may be the gentle healer or helpful diviner

from a small village. She may also serve in a noble court as the furtive advisor of a prince. These spellcasters work secretly within society, helping their community and friends, or furthering their own secret agenda. Of course, there are also the Sha'irs and Witches who give the entire calling a bad name—the necromancers, who practice their dark arts in the wilderness, far from the prying eyes of society. Because the evil ones represent such a negative, destructive force in a campaign, the DM should strongly consider limiting them to NPCs.









*Of all men, the Franj are the most cautious in warfare.*

—Usamah ibn Mundiqlh, c. 1100

Outremer was almost always on hostile terms with its Muslim neighbors. In a constant state of war, the Kingdom of Jerusalem constantly needed warriors. Though visiting lords on pilgrimage might contribute their personal forces for a seasonal campaign, the rulers of Outremer could rarely rely on transient outside assistance for their own defense. The scarcity of warriors led to the formation of the Military Orders, monastic brotherhoods of soldiers and knights devoted to the defense of the Holy Land. This chapter examines the Orders and the armor, weaponry, tactics, and fortifications of the Crusading era.

### The Military Orders

In the early 12th century, two religious Orders helped resolve the military manpower shortage in Outremer: the Order of the Temple (the Templars) and the Order of Saint John (the Hospitallers). The Military Orders enjoyed great popularity not only in the Holy Land, but also throughout Europe. By the mid-12th century, their responsibilities had expanded far beyond their original defensive duties; they contributed almost half the knights and foot soldiers to the king's army in defense of Outremer. Unlike other pilgrim-warriors, who campaigned in Palestine for one or two seasons before returning home to Europe, the Templars and Hospitallers were seasoned veterans, permanently stationed in Outremer. Fanatically loyal, experienced in combating the Saracens, and superbly equipped, they formed the elite of the Frankish army. The monastic warrior kit, described in Chapter 3, is based on these Military Orders.

Religious and military vocations became intermingled due to the necessities of the Crusades. Around 1118, a noble named Hugh

de Payens asked King Baldwin to use part of the deserted Al-Asqa Mosque as a dormitory for a new monastic order. Mistaking the mosque for the Temple of Solomon, the knights accordingly named their new brotherhood the Order of the Temple. In Europe, spiritual monasticism had already been popular for many centuries. The Templars combined religious and military service in a form of military monasticism. Whereas a normal monk fought the enemies of Christ with spiritual weapons, the monastic knight employed physical ones. The Templars also swore the Benedictine monastic oath of chastity, poverty, and obedience.

Initially, the Templars guarded the dangerous stretch of road from Jerusalem to the sea at Jaffa, protecting pilgrims and merchants traveling the highway from lightning-swift Saracen raids and rapacious bandits. The Templars quickly earned acclaim for their effectiveness in battle and their fanatical obedience to superiors' commands. The Templars fought to the death unless ordered to withdraw. The king gradually increased the Templars' responsibilities during the 12th century, generously donating large land tracts and castles that he could no longer adequately defend.

Before the Templars' meteoric rise to power, a group of monks and reverent citizens maintained a dormitory and hospital in Jerusalem for pilgrims of humble means. This Order, devoted to St. John the Almsgiver, was founded along Benedictine lines. Around 1118 an ambitious Frank, Raymond of Le Puy, became Grand Master, and he decided to expand the Order's purely pacifistic duties. The Order always retained its emphasis on healing and almsgiving, but with a substantial donation from the king, Raymond founded a class of knights and foot soldiers to defend Christendom: the Knights Hospitaller (also known as the Order of St. John).

To the folk of the Middle Ages, the Hospital of Saint John in Jerusalem must have seemed





huge and extravagantly generous. Regardless of the patients' financial background, all received clean clothes, generous servings of food, and semi-private, curtained partitions, each with an immaculate bed; and clerics were always on call for those in need of spiritual direction. The Hospitallers delivered the best medical care that Europe of the era could provide. In addition, the Order maintained other charitable institutions in Jerusalem, including a permanent soup kitchen and regular almsgiving.

The Templars also practiced regular almsgiving, but on a much smaller scale than the Hospitallers. The costs for maintaining their military and charitable operations was astronomical.

The Orders could not operate simply from their revenue and donations from the Holy Land. They were extremely popular in Europe, and vast donations poured into their coffers from all segments of society. Before long, they had established a lucrative financial network of income-producing estates all across Europe. The proceeds from their financial empires poured continually into a seemingly bottomless hole in Palestine. The Templars had access to such wealth that they reluctantly began providing banking services and loans to Crusading nobles and even monarchs who ran short on funds during their stay in the Holy Land. Despite their vow of poverty, the Military Orders had to get rich in order to finance their military operations, charitable works, and ever-increasing network of lands and fortifications.

Like the Church, the Military Orders were outside the jurisdiction of the king, who could only request—never order—their assistance. Under its Grand Master, who was directly accountable only to the Pope, each Military Order was organized into three general classes: knights, sergeants, and clerics. In general, knights were of noble birth, but both Orders made exceptions in the case where the applicant's birthright was either unknown or

in question. Common warriors became sergeants, who served as foot soldiers (though they often rode to battle on a palfrey, or riding horse). In addition to their military duties, sergeants tended the knights' horses and served as castellans or stewards. In rare cases, sergeants were sometimes promoted to the knight class for uncommonly valorous service. The third, clerical class of the Military Orders included priests, who were responsible for the spiritual fortitude of the Brotherhood. The clerics also performed healing and noncombatant duties, such as bookkeeping and correspondence. Templars adopted the red Latin cross as their symbol, worn on a white surcoat for knights and black for sergeants; the Hospitaller's symbol was a white, eight-pointed cross, sewn on the chest or shoulder of a black mantle and surcoat. (A red surcoat was used after 1259.)

Because of their outstanding reputation for charitable works, the public regarded the Hospitallers more highly than they did the Templars, whom they considered too strict and slightly arrogant. On the battlefield, the Military Orders commanded equal respect from both secular Christian knights and the Saracens, who abhorred them with a passion that bespoke their effectiveness on the battlefield. The Muslims considered the slaying of a Templar or Hospitaller—a dedicated enemy of Islam—a pious and meritorious act. Even the magnanimous Saladin had no mercy for members of the Military Orders. Though he often ransomed important secular knights and even kings, he always had Templars and Hospitallers summarily executed by decapitation or hanging. After a battle, Muslim captains would beg Saladin for the privilege of personally executing these most infamous prisoners. Clearly, the prestige of the Military Orders had its drawbacks.

Templars and Hospitallers were bitter rivals. They competed heavily for a limited number of charitable donations and royal grants for castles and lands. Though in a cri-





sis they could fight effectively together, in peacetime they opposed each other strenuously. If the Templars supported one political faction at court, then naturally the Hospitallers staunchly supported the opposing faction. This political infighting led to disastrous results during the Second Crusade, when both Grand Masters devoted too much time to bickering rather than positive endeavors. Ultimately the endless feud between Templars and Hospitallers contributed to the political squabbles, intrigue, and internal divisiveness that culminated in the Battle at Hattin in 1187 and the subsequent loss of Jerusalem.

### Medieval Combat

After the First Crusade, when most of the warriors returned to Europe, only a few hundred knights and foot soldiers remained to defend the Holy Land. When Baldwin I began his campaigns to expand the kingdom, for instance, he could call on only 300 knights and perhaps an equal number of sergeants-at-arms. Even with this small army, Baldwin repeatedly thwarted massive Egyptian invasions by armies that often vastly outnumbered Frankish forces.

Christian knights were far better armed and armored than their Muslim opponents. The knights' most dreaded tactic—the cavalry charge—was virtually unstoppable. The awesome sight of Frankish cavalry, charging with lowered lances, caused Arab footmen to break ranks and flee. When terrain or circumstances prevented a charge, the Franks favored a heavy Norman long sword, which could cut a man in half. The lighter Muslim chain mail and lamellar armor provided little defense against this weapon. A knight's other favored melee weapons included the iron mace, flail, and morning star.

The Franks relied on their heavy coat of mail, or hauberk, for defense. Despite the brutal Syrian heat, the Franks would carry a

kite-shaped shield and wear leather or felt padding under their full suit of chain mail—including a coif (headpiece), mittens, and leggings. Over their mail coif, they wore a great iron helm. To reduce the sun's intensity, they wore a thin cloth surcoat over their mail, and a cloth *kiffiyeh*, or turban, over their helm in Syrian fashion. Nevertheless, the armor must have been incredibly hot, especially during the arid summer months.

This armor was extremely effective. The short composite bows of the Turkish cavalry had difficulty penetrating the mail and underlying padding, to the amazement of both Christian and Muslim chroniclers of the Crusades. After an engagement with Turkish cavalry, it was not uncommon to see a Frankish knight bristling with a few dozen arrows, like a porcupine. Turkish arrows were much more effective at slaying horses than the knights who rode them. The curved Syrian scimitar, the most popular weapon among the Muslims, was an effective slashing weapon against lightly armored opponents, but against Frankish mail, it lost much cutting power. In short, the armored Frankish warrior was very difficult to kill on the battlefield. This helps explain why so many Frankish leaders were captured in battle rather than slain, and why the Crusaders adamantly refused to abandon their mail, even during the brutal summer.

During the Crusades, the Franks increasingly employed the crossbow in their pitched battles and stronghold defense. Despite its slow rate of fire, the crossbow's sturdy arrow (also called a bolt or a quarrel) had much greater penetration than the composite bows of the Turks. The crossbow could slay a fully armored knight with a single shot at almost 150 yards. Because of its destructive capability, several Popes outlawed the weapon for brief periods during the Middle Ages. Many honorable warriors viewed the crossbow as unchivalrous, for it gave a common peasant or foot soldier the combat effectiveness of a





knight. Unlike a bow, the crossbow was easy to learn and use. It was ideal for lengthy siege operations, and much larger variants were developed into siege engines.

### **Military Tactics**

Despite their prowess, the Franks were extremely cautious in battle. With a limited reserve of manpower, the Franks could ill afford any casualties, while the resources of their enemies were virtually unlimited. The Fatimid Caliphate of Egypt, for instance, could assemble a yearly invasion force, numbering in the thousands, to fight the Franks. The defenders of Palestine, on the other hand, had no such reinforcements. To assemble an army, the king had to strip the garrisons of his towns and strongholds. In the event of a catastrophic defeat, the kingdom was virtually defenseless. For this reason, after Saladin smashed the Frankish army at Hattin in 1187, within less than a year he reconquered almost all of Palestine. After the Frankish defeat, there were simply no effective reserves left in Palestine to oppose him.

Given their numerical inferiority and the catastrophic price of defeat, the Franks had reason to be cautious. The king would only call together the forces of his realm for two reasons: to invest (besiege) and reduce a fortified position (thereby expanding his realm), or to deter the Saracens from invading his territory. Because of the considerable risks, the Franks only sought battle as a last resort.

The Frankish army's primary objective was new territory, and their first step in capturing a town or castle was to invest it. The attacking army completely encircled a hostile fortification, cutting off supplies, reinforcements, and communication. They seldom risked a direct assault with siege engines, battering rams, mobile towers, and scaling ladders. Unless the defenders were surprised or too few to man the walls, a frontal attack with scaling ladders alone rarely succeeded. The fanatical

Crusaders tried this tactic when they reached Jerusalem in 1099, but they were thrown back after repeated attempts. Only after they dismantled most of their ships at Jaffa to make siege engines and mobile towers did they succeed in surmounting the walls and capturing the city, many months after their first assault.

Usually the Franks captured cities and castles after a negotiated surrender, rather than by direct assault. After they had invested a stronghold, hunger, disease, and despair would eventually force the defender to capitulate. With ample supplies and reinforcements, however, a besieged city could hold out almost indefinitely. The siege of Tripoli after the First Crusade dragged on for almost 2,000 days; the siege of Acre in the Third Crusade lasted 20 months. Depending on their morale, the defenders would sometimes surrender a hopeless situation if the terms were generous and they knew their lives would be spared. In the face of certain slaughter, however, most defenders fought to a bitter end.

Because a hasty surrender was obviously in the Franks' best interests, they made the price of resistance brutally clear to their enemies from the outset. After reducing the city of Arsuf in 1101, King Baldwin I ordered a systematic slaughter of the surviving defenders, as an example to neighboring Muslim cities that they should surrender immediately when he approached. Such blatant cruelty could be a two-edged sword. Though in the short term it terrorized cities into submission, it so hardened the hearts of some defenders that they fought with more determination, convinced the Franks would murder them anyway. The few incidences of Frankish brutality greatly hindered the process of negotiating peace with their Muslim neighbors for many years.

The Franks' second purpose was to deter enemy advances. The Saracen leaders, like the Franks, realized the risks of battle and would only commit to a siege when the





enemy lacked reinforcements. It was almost impossible to successfully besiege a stronghold with an opposing army in the field. (The Frankish victory at Acre during the Third Crusade was a rare exception.) When the Franks captured Jerusalem in 1099, their siege preparations were not hindered by a hostile army; during the Third Crusade, the presence of Saladin's army in the field assured that Richard would not recapture the Holy City. Previously, in 1183 and 1184, Saladin tried to capture the stronghold of Kerak. Saladin's siege was broken in each instance by the timely arrival of King Baldwin IV's army from Jerusalem. On both occasions, Saladin withdrew long before the reinforcements arrived. During these and other campaigns, both Franks and Saracens would return home without fighting a single major engagement.

### Crusader Castles

From the beginning of the Crusades, the Franks vigorously built castles to control and defend strategic sites. They built strongholds extensively during their two centuries of occupation in the Holy Land, not only on the frontier with their Muslim neighbors, but also concentrated in the very heart of Outremer. Except for their castles, the Crusaders contributed little to the historical development of architecture in the region. They built no lasting public monuments or elegant palaces like the Byzantines. When compared with the majestic Frankish cathedrals back in Europe, the Crusaders' achievements in religious architecture seem hardly noteworthy. In the art of fortification, however, the Crusaders excelled. Many castles, or their ruins, still stand in modern Israel and Syria.

These castles had offensive, defensive, and administrative functions. Sometimes they aided offensive sieges. During the Frankish siege of Antioch in 1098, the Crusaders hindered Turkish sorties by erecting a permanent stone tower, named Malregard, outside

one of the main city gates. Count Raymond, when he invested Tyre in 1102, erected a small castle called Mount Pilgrim on the main approach to the city. The inhabitants of Tyre were so dismayed to see the construction of Mount Pilgrim outside their walls that they launched several dangerous sorties in futile attempts to burn or demolish the castle before its completion.

However, the castles primarily defended strategic sites against the enemy. By themselves, fortifications in this era could not hinder invasion. After the advent of gunpowder, a fort could command an entire valley with accurate long-range cannons; but in the medieval age, when siege engines worked best against stationary targets (like a stone wall) and had an effective range of only a few hundred yards, a castle could not inflict casualties on an enemy riding past.

Although the Franks erected a line of castles along their eastern frontier, they could not stop anything larger than a minor border raid. The Muslims staged major raids and invasions straight through the frontier to ravage the heart of Outremer. During the late 12th century, Saladin regularly marched his large armies back and forth from Cairo to Damascus, straight through the southern domain of the Franks. However, although a frontier castle could not halt a major Muslim advance, it could send early warning of an invasion to Jerusalem.

The Franks often chose to fight battles near their castles. Frankish fighters could rally or rendezvous at a stronghold, and they could retreat to its safe haven in the event of calamity. During an age when the enemy would strip the land of supplies and poison exposed wells, the castle sheltered a protected water supply and stockpiled provisions in its cellars.

In a siege, the castle provided an easily defensible haven for soldiers, livestock, the local lord, his family, and even the local populace—if they could be trusted not to betray



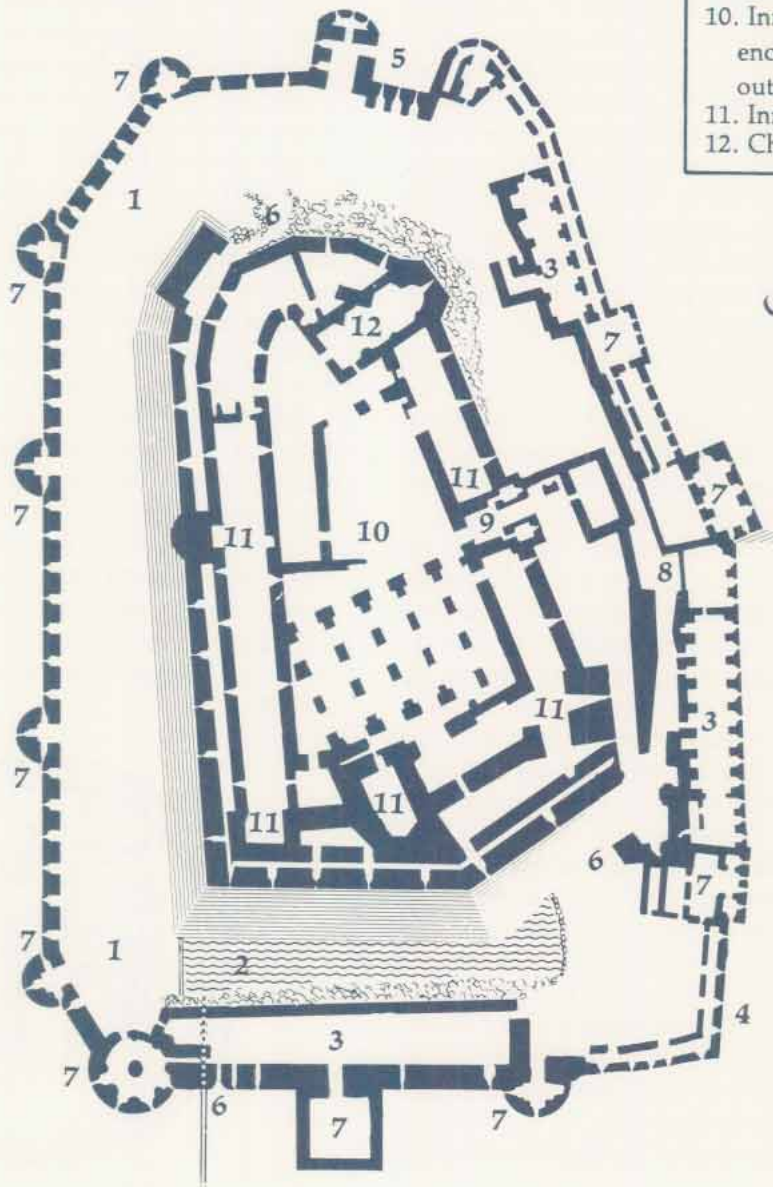


## Map 2: Krak des Chevalliers.

This castle guarded the main mountain pass leading to the Muslim city of Homs, and it was instrumental in the defense of Tripoli. The Franks captured the site in 1110 and in 1144 handed it over to the Hospitallers, who continually upgraded its defenses. The stronghold did not fall until 1271, shortly before the final collapse of Outremer.

### Legend

1. Outer ward
2. Pool
3. Outer galleries
4. Outer curtain
5. Main outer entrance
6. Postern (rear gate)
7. Outer towers
8. Covered approach
9. Inner entrance
10. Inner bailey (space enclosed by a castle's outer walls)
11. Inner towers
12. Chapel







the lord. Many Muslim strongholds expelled Christian inhabitants during a siege for fear of treachery, which could defeat even the strongest defenses.

For instance, when the Crusaders arrived outside Antioch in 1098, the Turkish ruler, Yaghi-Siyan, ejected all Christian men from the city. The *atabeg's* paranoia over treachery was justified. Years earlier, he had captured Antioch with the help of a traitor. Despite all his precautions, however, the city was ultimately betrayed by a disgruntled armorer named Firuz, whom the sultan had heavily fined for black market activities. In revenge Firuz contacted the Crusaders and arranged to drop ropes from the Two Sisters Tower, which he supposedly guarded at night. By morning, Bohemund of Taranto and some adventurers had slipped inside, opened a gate, and admitted the Franks into the city. No castle, however well defended, was ever secure against a traitor.

Given the chronic manpower shortages in Outremer, Frankish castles were designed to let a small garrison withstand a siege until the king arrived with reinforcements. Though Crusader castles varied greatly in design, all relied extensively on a site's natural defenses. Their sheer inaccessibility made many castles impregnable to conventional siege practices; you can't roll a siege tower against a castle on a mountaintop! The Franks, like the Syrians and Turks, always built their castles in lofty and inaccessible locations: a raised plateau, mountain, towering ridge, or high spur of land between two river beds.

During the 12th century the religious Military Orders rose in power and importance, due to the scarcity of trained secular soldiers in the Holy Land. The rulers of Outremer gradually handed control of sparsely garrisoned castles to the Templars and Hospitallers. For instance, the Hospitallers received the stronghold of Krak des Chevaliers in 1144. Like many Crusader castles, its concentric higher walls were topped by battlements and

pierced by scores of arrow slits. Missile fire could engage an enemy from both the lower outer walls and the higher inner fortress simultaneously. At the heart of this massive stronghold, a large, austere chapel provided the focal point of daily life for its monastic inhabitants. Krak des Chevaliers thus combined both military and religious functions in a well-fortified monastery.

Castles in Outremer also served as personal residences and administrative centers for secular lords. These functions represent Western European attitudes towards castles. Byzantine fortifications, by contrast, rarely served as personal residences. Byzantine armies consisted primarily of career soldiers who left their families at home. Their strongholds were often fortified camps like those of ancient Rome. In general, Arabs and Turks also separated military from personal life. A sultan lived in a sumptuous palace or a comfortable tent, not a castle.

The Frankish secular nobility, however, lived in their strongholds, where the elderly and children mingled freely with soldiers and free-ranging livestock. The lord of a castle regularly held court and arbitrated public disputes in his great hall. At meals the servants would hastily erect trestle tables, converting the chamber into a huge dining hall for the lord's family and retainers. The Frank's home *was* his castle.







**Map 3: Political Map of Outremer During the Crusades**





*"Truly it was an amazing miracle that we lived at all among so many thousands of thousands, still more that we ruled some and made them pay tribute, and threw others into confusion by plundering them and taking them captive. . . . What historic times!"*

—Fulcher of Chartres, c. 1100

The spectacular success of the First Crusade established a Western European presence in the Holy Land for almost two centuries. The Franks referred to the Crusader States as *Outremer* ("beyond the sea"). They established the County of Edessa and the Principality of Antioch to the north of Palestine in 1098, and the Kingdom of Jerusalem the following year. In 1109, the king established a fourth Crusader State, the County of Tripoli, following a lengthy siege of the city. Today these lands include regions of Israel, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan.

Arid and sweltering during the summer, Outremer also experienced long, cool winters. To the Frankish inhabitants, it was a region of dangerous enemies, continual warfare, and exotic luxury. In comparison with France and England during the Middle Ages, the Crusader States were extremely tiny. Along the northern frontier, the domains of Edessa, Tripoli, and Antioch each measured less than a hundred miles across. The Kingdom of Jerusalem, the largest of the Latin settlements, was nearly 300 miles long, but in the north, it narrowed to a width of only 10 miles.

In spite of its small size, the social, political, and economic life of Outremer was complex. The Franks who remained in the Holy Land after the First Crusade were a tiny minority, ruling a large population of diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds. This chapter examines the history and society of the primary setting for the Crusades campaign: the Holy Land.

### Society in Outremer

After the capture of Jerusalem, most Crusaders returned to Europe, leaving behind only a few to defend the Holy Land against the Saracens. By the mid-12th century, the landed Western aristocracy in the Kingdom of Jerusalem numbered around 1,000 lords and knights; the noncombatant elderly, women, and children contributed perhaps another thousand to the noble inhabitants. Including a few hundred clergy, the total population of the aristocracy in Outremer probably never exceeded 3,000.

In general, the Frankish aristocracy did not intermarry with the local Christian population. By the time of the Third Crusade, the nobility had formed so many internal marital alliances that the leaders of the aristocracy were interrelated. Though the nobility produced many children, infant mortality in Outremer was terribly high, especially among boys.

As inheritances and fiefs frequently passed to female heirs, women of the aristocracy enjoyed uncommon rights and privileges. Not only could a woman choose her own husband, she could also inherit and hold land in her own name. The history of Outremer is filled with strong and brave women who stepped into positions of leadership and power during a pivotal moment. For instance, Princess Alice of Antioch, the daughter of King Baldwin I, became a prominent figure in regional politics and intrigue after her husband died in 1130. Alice promptly revolted against her father's lordship in Jerusalem and refused to remarry, proclaiming herself the sole ruler of Antioch in the absence of a male heir. Her rulership was unpopular and did not last long, but such daring was practically impossible for a lady back in Europe.

Many men-at-arms of the First Crusade chose to settle with their lords in Outremer, forming a numerous "sergeant" class. The sergeants eagerly intermarried with the local





Christian populace, swelling the numbers of Frankish soldiers to over 5,000 by 1180. Some sergeants, called "Turcoples," were trained as light cavalry using Turkish or Byzantine tactics. By the end of the 12th century, nearly all these sergeant families were of mixed Frankish and Syrian-Christian heritage.

Aside from the Franks, only Italian merchants and their families contributed significantly to the Western European presence in Outremer. The first Kings of Jerusalem looked to the mercenary, mercantile city-states of Italy for naval support in their conquest of ports along the Mediterranean coast. In exchange for Italian assistance, the rulers of Outremer allowed the merchant houses to establish exclusive trading monopolies in their cities. The Italian merchant families lived apart from the Franks, in a separate district, or quarter, within each city. The families from different Italian city-states, such as Venice, Genoa, or Pisa, owned and operated entire streets of shops in the bazaar, or central market. The Venetians, Genoese, and Pisans were all bitter rivals, and maintained even smaller sub-communities within the Italian quarter. Though the Italians residing in Outremer played an important role in city life and regional trade, they generally left matters of government and defense to the Franks.

Aside from the Franks and the Italian merchant families, no other major European powers played a lasting role in Outremer. During the 11th and 12th centuries, the Normans (French-speaking Christians of Scandinavian Viking descent who settled in northern France, now Normandy) were the conquering race of Europe, ruling northern France, the British Isles, and southern Italy. The Spanish were embroiled in their own wars during the *Reconquista* that recaptured the Iberian peninsula from the Muslim Moors, and the Germans—the only other powerful European nationality—never enjoyed much success during the Crusades. During the first three Crusades, German expeditions to the Holy

Land were repeatedly crushed by the Turks as they crossed Anatolia (now part of Turkey), long before they ever reached Outremer. Germans did not establish a major presence in the Holy Land until the mid-13th century.

Outremer's native Syrian-Christians made up the vast majority of the population, especially in the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Despite the common religion, the Syrian-Christians appeared totally alien to the ruling minority of Franks. Natives spoke the local language—usually a dialect of Arabic—had the swarthy complexions and distinctive facial features of Arabs, and even followed Arab practices of personal hygiene and medicine. Furthermore, though they were Christian, most Syrians embraced the Greek-Orthodox rites of the Byzantine Empire, which many Franks considered heretical. Not surprisingly, Franks regarded the native Christians as second-class citizens. Though the Franks gradually adopted the native dress of the region, learned Arabic, frequented bath-houses, and relished the local cuisine, the Frankish conquerors obstinately imposed the Latin rite in church and gradually replaced all Greek Orthodox patriarchs in Outremer with Latin priests from Europe.

In the northern states of Antioch and Edessa, Armenians formed the majority of the native population. Converted to Christianity centuries ago, the proud mountain folk established an independent church, which the Crusaders eventually supplanted with their own Latin hierarchy. Unlike the Syrians, who held the Franks in neutral regard, Armenians behaved with mixed loyalty and treachery toward their overlords.

Many important cities of Outremer also contained small Muslim and Jewish communities, which remained in Christian-dominated lands despite unrelenting religious persecution and harassment. After the Christian occupation of Palestine, most Muslims abandoned their homes, shops, and farms and emigrated to nearby Damascus, where





they were welcomed as heroes. Faithful Muslims could not remain in a country surrounded by infidels (unbelievers), who continually denounced Islam and publicly insulted the Prophet Muhammad.

The Jewish population suffered as greatly as the Muslims did. During the Crusades, many Franks believed that the Jews were directly responsible for the death of Christ. The Jews had enjoyed far greater religious freedom under Muslim rule than they did under the Franks. Not surprisingly, many chose to emigrate to Damascus rather than live with the Frankish occupation.

The population of Outremer was thus a tangled social tapestry. Small numbers of Franks ruled a vastly larger population of native Syrian-Christians in the Kingdom of Jerusalem, and Armenians in the northern states of Antioch and Edessa. These natives dwelt mainly in the countryside. In the cities, rival Pisans, Genoese, and Venetians dominated the mercantile districts. Despite discrimination, tiny Muslim and Jewish quarters remained in the cities, primarily to support traveling pilgrims and merchants of their religions. Each group spoke a different language, practiced a different religion, and observed widely varying customs. Faced with this cultural diversity, many Franks “went native” themselves within a generation, quickly adopting the dress, habits, and diet of the local population.

### Life in Outremer

There was no shortage of game in the wild highlands of Palestine, and along with this food, the Franks enjoyed the region’s abundance of exotic spices: cloves, cinnamon, dill, saffron, turmeric, and coriander. They relished the strange fruits and vegetables, like the olive, fig, muskmelon, cucumber, and pomegranate. Sumptuous fabrics were available for tapestries, linens, carpets, and other opulent furnishings. Glass, uncommon in

parts of Europe, was readily available here, especially near the coastal cities where large foundries operated; many a lord’s and merchant’s private apartments were fitted with window panes. In many cases members of the middle class, and even courtesans, outshone the nobility in their taste for lavish clothes and posh furnishings. Silk fabrics were heavily brocaded with gold thread and sometimes small jewels. In Outremer, the nobility and affluent middle class enjoyed luxury unthinkable to the wealthiest aristocracy back in Europe.

Though the standard of living in Outremer was opulent by European standards, Palestine was a poor backwater compared with its wealthy Muslim neighbors. The cities of Palestine exported few native goods except cloth and sugar; they relied extensively on trade for economic prosperity. The wealthy Muslim cities of Aleppo, Mosul, and Damascus used Palestine’s ports—especially Acre—to transport their goods to the Mediterranean.

Surprisingly, in the latter 12th century the flow of commerce from Muslim cities through Outremer continued unabated, despite hostilities between their respective governments. Caravans continued to move from Damascus to Acre, regardless of the political climate in Jerusalem. Rulers in Outremer realized that their long-term economic prosperity lay in trade. In general, Muslim caravans and merchants entered the port cities even during declared wars. Merchant caravans were always a tempting target for bandits and impoverished (or ambitious) lords. Hence, they always traveled with a detachment of guards for protection, though the vigilance and morale of these guardians varied considerably.

Pilgrims newly arrived from Europe were always astounded by the almost festive prodigality of the Franks. The aristocracy constantly sponsored jousts and other contests, offering opulent gifts of weapons, armor, horses and sometimes even gold as prizes.













remer around to their line of thinking. The Crusaders believed that members of the pacifistic "Tolerant" faction were misguided traitors to Christ and the Kingdom of Jerusalem; the Tolerants thought Crusaders were close-minded, religious fanatics who threatened the peace, and ultimately the continued survival, of the Christian States in Outremer. Historically, the Crusader faction was usually more influential at court.

During the brief reign of Baldwin IV, the tragic "Leper King," conflict between the two factions approached open civil war. Baldwin's successor, the feebleminded King Guy, was noted for his tendency to believe the last person speaking to him. Usually, that person was the fanatical Reynald de Châtillon, an adventurer and robber-baron with a legendary hatred of the Saracens, who had imprisoned him for 16 years.

Reynald had a talent for making members of the Tolerant faction look like cowardly traitors, and he deliberately sabotaged the peace of the kingdom at every opportunity. Whenever the king negotiated a treaty with Saladin, Reynald broke it—first by capturing rich caravans, later by building a pirate fleet and pillaging down the coast of the Red Sea. Reynald's legendary raid never reached its intended destination, the Muslim holy city of Mecca. When Saladin learned of this Frankish outrage, he swore to slay Reynald with his own hand and drive all the remaining Franks into the sea. After the Battle of Hattin, Saladin had the impudent Reynald brought into his tent, where he struck off the Frank's head with a single blow from his own scimitar.

Ironically, the fanaticism of the Crusading mentality, which helped capture the Holy Land in the first place, also contributed to its ultimate defeat.

### **Timeline: 1098-1187**

The convoluted political and military developments in Outremer often depended

on events in distant Europe, Byzantium, Egypt, and Muslim Syria. This timeline traces events that shaped the history of the Frankish states in Palestine from their creation in 1098 to their disastrous defeat in 1187. Use these events to inspire story ideas and give historical flavor to the campaign.

**1098.** Baldwin of Bouillon marries an Armenian bride and inherits the Principality of Edessa under dubious circumstances. In June, Crusaders capture Antioch. Famine grips the Crusaders during the winter.

**1099.** Bohemund of Taranto becomes the first Prince of Antioch. The Crusaders capture Jerusalem in July, slaughtering all its Moslem and Jewish inhabitants. Godfrey of Lorraine is elected the first ruler of Jerusalem. In August, the Franks defeat an Egyptian army at Ascalon.

**1100.** Godfrey makes treaties with the Muslim Emirs along the Mediterranean coast of Palestine and raids Damascus. He becomes sick and dies in July. By November, Baldwin of Edessa becomes Godfrey's successor in Jerusalem.

**1101.** King Baldwin raids Transjordan in the spring and captures the Mediterranean cities of Arsuf and Caesarea by May. The king defeats an Egyptian expeditionary force at the first Battle of Ramleh in September.

**1102.** Baldwin's forces are defeated by a new Egyptian army at a second battle of Ramleh in May. The king escapes the massacre to gather reinforcements and rout the Egyptians at Jaffa. In the north, Raymond of Toulouse raises an army and captures Tortosa. He lays siege to Tripoli, and defeats an army outside the city walls.

**1103.** The siege at Tripoli continues; Raymond conquers the surrounding countryside and erects a castle called Mount Pilgrim outside the invested city. Baldwin invests Acre, but the siege is broken by the arrival of an Egyptian fleet.

**1104.** Mount Pilgrim is completed outside Tripoli; the siege there continues. Prince





Bohemund and Count Baldwin of Edessa strike east into Arabia but are soundly defeated at the Battle of Harran.

In May, the king makes an alliance with a Genoese fleet and invests Acre once again. The city capitulates after only 20 days.

1105. Raymond falls ill and dies in February, creating succession troubles in Toulouse. During the summer, the vizier of Egypt sends another army to Palestine. The Fatimids are defeated at the third Battle of Ramleh in August.

1106. In the fall, Baldwin defeats an Egyptian expeditionary force near Hebron. Tyre and Damascus strike unsuccessfully at new Christian castles along the frontier.

1108. In despair, the Emir of Tripoli visits the Caliph of Baghdad for aid. During his departure, Tripoli's desperate nobles invite Egyptian forces into the city. In spring, Toghtekin of Damascus raids the towns of Galilee. By August, Baldwin invests Sidon, but the siege is broken by Egyptian and Damascene reinforcements. During the winter, Baldwin and Toghtekin sign a 10-year truce for commercial reasons.

1109. Bertrand of Toulouse, Raymond's illegitimate son, arrives at Tripoli. King Baldwin arrives to aid the siege. The city capitulates and Bertrand becomes the first Count of Tripoli.

1110. In February, Bertrand helps Baldwin lay siege to Beirut, which surrenders by May. With the arrival of Western naval reinforcements, Baldwin finally captures Sidon by December.

1111. Baldwin invests Tyre and Ascalon, but each siege is unsuccessful.

1113. The king raids Damascene territory, breaking his truce.

1115-16. Baldwin fortifies the kingdom with castles in southern Judea.

1118. The Order of the Temple and the Order of St. John are established in Jerusalem. In March, Baldwin invades Egypt, but catches a fatal illness and dies by April. On Easter

Sunday the previous Count of Edessa is crowned Baldwin II. Joscelin becomes the new Count of Edessa.

1119. Roger, Prince of Antioch, raises an army and marches on Aleppo. In June, his forces are annihilated, leaving Antioch leaderless and the North undefended. The Aleppans do not press their advantage. Baldwin writes to the Republic of Venice, begging assistance.

1122. King Baldwin is captured during a surprise Aleppan raid.

1123. In May, Egypt invades Palestine once again but is defeated by timely arrival of a powerful Venetian fleet.

1124. After intense negotiations, the Venetians agree to help invest Tyre. The siege begins in February and drags on into the summer. Baldwin is released in June for a high ransom. Tyre finally surrenders in July and the fleet returns to Venice.

1125. Baldwin rallies the northern princes and smashes a Muslim army at Azaz. After the victory, the king returns to Palestine and raids Damascus and Ascalon in the autumn.

1126. An Egyptian fleet raids along the coast. Baldwin establishes Bohemund II as the new Prince of Antioch.

1127. The Princes of Antioch and Edessa quarrel. The Turkish *atabeg* Zengi organizes a Seljuq government at Mosul.

1128. By June, Zengi marches on Aleppo, which receives him with open arms after years of political anarchy.

1130. Zengi extends his control as far south as Homs. Bohemund II is slain during a raid on Damascus, leaving Antioch without an adult heir. Bohemund's wife, Princess Alice of Antioch, revolts against her father, King Baldwin. Baldwin travels north to assure her submission, but after her father's arrival, Alice withdraws to Lattakieh.

1131. Baldwin grows ill and dies in August. Joscelin of Edessa perishes soon afterward during a raid on Aleppo. Alice of Antioch quickly resumes control of the city after her





father's death. Baldwin's first daughter, Melisende, and her husband Fulk are crowned together in September.

**1132-34.** While King Fulk takes his army to leaderless Antioch and Edessa, Queen Melisende dallies with a handsome young knight at court. Fulk and Zengi's lieutenant, Sawar, conduct frontier raids in the north.

**1135.** Zengi and Sawar capture castles along the Edessene frontier.

**1136.** The Patriarch of Antioch secretly marries Raymond of Poitiers to Constance, Alice's eight-year-old daughter, crowning Raymond the new Prince. Defeated, Alice dies soon after her retreat to Lattikieh. In Edessa, a private war breaks out among Armenian nobles, and during the confusion, Sawar raids deep into the county.

**1137.** In the spring, Damascus invades the County of Tripoli, capturing two frontier castles. In June, Zengi clashes with Fulk in the north, near Homs, defeating the Franks and forcing the king to Montferrand. Zengi besieges the stronghold and Fulk surrenders the castle in exchange for his freedom.

In August, after campaigning against the Turks of Anatolia, Emperor John I arrives at Antioch with a massive army. John lays siege to the city until Prince Raymond surrenders and reluctantly pays him homage.

**1138.** John and the Frankish lords of Antioch and Edessa invest Shaizar, but dissension among the Franks causes the emperor to abandon the siege by May. In the fall, John departs Antioch in disgust for further campaigns in Anatolia. In June, Zengi marries the princess of Damascus, gaining Homs as her dowry. However, intrigues prevent Zengi from gaining control of the city.

**1139.** Zengi lays siege to Damascus through the winter.

**1140.** The *atabeg* Unur of Damascus and King Fulk form an alliance and drive Zengi away from the Muslim city.

**1141.** The Sultan of Baghdad seeks to reassert his authority over Zengi. The *atabeg* is

distracted from pursuing his military campaigns in Syria for two years while he assures his overlord of his continued loyalty.

**1142.** Emperor John I returns to the border of Antioch and demands complete submission from Raymond. The frightened prince stalls for time.

**1143.** In March, Emperor John I is fatally wounded in a hunting accident. In November, Fulk also dies in a hunting accident. Queen Melisende assumes leadership of the realm as regent for her younger son, King Baldwin III.

**1144.** Raymond quarrels with the new Byzantine emperor, and argues with Joscelin II, Count of Edessa. Zengi lures Joscelin out of Edessa and strikes at the city in November, during the count's absence. In December, the *atabeg* captures Edessa.

**1145.** Zengi consolidates his position in Edessa. Hearing of a revolt in Mosul, Zengi returns home to quash the rebellion. Queen Melisende dispatches an envoy to Rome to beg the Pope for a second Crusade. In December, Pope Eugenius III calls on Louis, King of France, to rescue the Christian states of Palestine.

**1146.** Zengi prepares a new campaign in Syria. During September, however, a slave murders Zengi in his sleep. After Zengi's death, Raymond raids near Aleppo, and Joscelin attempts to recapture Edessa. Nur-al-din, one of Zengi's sons, clashes with Joscelin outside the walls of Edessa, soundly defeating the Frankish forces. In Europe, Saint Bernard preaches the Second Crusade across France, Italy, and Germany.

**1147.** Mellisende breaks the treaty with Damascus, forcing the *atabeg* Unur to make an alliance with Nur al-din. In May, the king leads an army against unified Muslim opposition. Baldwin withdraws to Palestine while Nur al-din consolidates his power east of the Orontes.

**1148: The Second Crusade.** Forces of the Second Crusade arrive at Jerusalem by April.





There, the Christian leaders quarrel over a target for the Crusade. Finally deciding on Damascus, their combined army lays siege to the city in July. The Damascene *atabeg*, Unur, summons help from Nur al-din at Aleppo. Trapped between the armies of Damascus and Aleppo, the Franks reluctantly retreat, but their slow withdrawal is harried by bowmen, who inflict heavy casualties. The Second Crusade ends in humiliation and defeat.

**1149.** In May, Unur of Damascus accepts a two-year truce with Jerusalem. During June, Raymond battles Nur al-din near Inab, and the Prince of Antioch is slain in combat. In August, Unur dies and is replaced by a weaker emir named Mejuir.

**1150.** In March, Nur al-din marches on Damascus. Mejuir sends to Jerusalem for aid. King Baldwin advances north and Nur al-din withdraws. Baldwin hastily arranges a truce with Mejuir. Count Joscelin is captured in April by Turkish adventurers and handed over to Nur al-din. With King Baldwin's permission, the Countess of Edessa sells her remaining lands near Turbussel to the Byzantine emperor, permanently dissolving the northern county.

**1151.** Nur al-din captures Turbussel. Princess Constance of Antioch dallies over her choice for a new husband.

**1152.** Assassins murder the Count of Tripoli outside the gates of his city. In March, King Baldwin forcibly deposes his regent mother, Mellisende, and assumes control of the government.

**1153.** In January, Baldwin lays siege to Ascalon, which surrenders by August. In the spring, Constance of Antioch decides to marry a handsome young upstart, Reynald of Châtillon.

**1154.** After a propaganda campaign against Mejuir of Damascus, Nur al-Din quickly advances on the demoralized city and captures it after only a one-week siege. In May, the reigning vizier in Egypt falls in a quick coup. The chaotic Fatimid court is rife





with intrigue that effectively paralyzes the government.

**1156.** In March, Reynald assembles a fleet in Antioch and invades Cyprus, brutally devastating the Byzantine island and angering Emperor Manuel. During early autumn, strong earthquakes devastate the Muslim cities of northern Syria.

**1157.** In the spring, violent aftershocks shake the Orontes river valley, destroying both Muslim and Christian fortifications.

The Count of Thiery arrives from Europe with a small army. In the winter, Baldwin, Thiery, and the precocious Reynald march on the earthquake-damaged city of Shaizar.

**1158.** Shaizar capitulates in February. In September, Baldwin marries Princess Theodora of Constantinople and allies with Emperor Manuel against both Nur al-din and the rebellious Reynald. By winter, the emperor arrives outside Antioch. Frightened, Reynald averts disaster by contritely submitting to Manuel.

**1159.** In April, Emperor Manuel occupies Antioch. Nur al-din quickly sends the emperor a hoard of tribute, requesting a truce. After signing the treaty, Manuel departs for home, arriving in September.

**1160.** Baldwin raids the lands near Damascus. In November, Reynald is captured during a raid and jailed with Joscelin, the lord of former Edessa. Reynald remains in prison for the next 16 years.

**1161.** Emperor Manuel breaks off an engagement with Lady Melisende of Tripoli. Enraged, the count assembles a fleet and raids the Byzantine island of Cyprus.

**1162.** King Baldwin III grows ill and dies in February. The kingship passes to Baldwin's brother, Amalric.

**1163.** When Amalric leaves to attack Egypt, Nur al-din strikes at Tripoli. The Christian forces reassemble and defeat Nur al-din's army at Kerak.

**1164.** Shawar, a deposed vizier of Egypt, invites Nur al-din to reinstate him in Cairo

during April. Nur al-din sends his best general, Shirkuh, to assist the ex-vizier. Once reinstated, the vizier promptly expels Shirkuh from Cairo in May. The Turkish general captures Bilbeis, and Shawar quickly bribes King Amalric to help dislodge him. Amalric arrives at Bilbeis in August.

During the king's absence, Nur al-din strikes at the north, capturing both the Prince of Antioch and the Count of Tripoli in battle. Amalric lifts the siege, hastens north, and negotiates the release of Prince Bohemund.

**1165-66.** Nur al-din attacks strongholds along the Lebanese frontier. In the south, his general Shirkuh raids Outrejourdain.

**1167.** In January, Shirkuh and his nephew Salah ad-din (Saladin) depart Damascus to invade Egypt. The Franks assemble an army to intercept the Syrian forces and are welcomed by vizier Shawar near Cairo. After a month of maneuvers, the Syrian army defeats the Franco-Egyptian coalition in March. When Amalric and Shawar retreat to Cairo, Shirkuh captures Alexandria. By June, Amalric and Shawar lay siege to Alexandria, forcing Shirkuh and Saladin to surrender the city. The Syrians return to Damascus in July.

Meanwhile, back in Palestine, Nur al-din raids Tripoli during the summer. After arranging a truce with Shawar, Amalric hastens home in August to organize the kingdom's battered defenses. By the end of the month, Amalric marries Maria Comnena, the emperor's grand-niece.

**1168.** Amalric negotiates an alliance with the emperor to conquer Egypt, but troubling news from Cairo forces the king to strike in October without Byzantine assistance. Amalric first feints at Homs to distract Nur al-din, then quickly turns and in November strikes at Bilbeis, catching the truce-abiding Egyptians by surprise. Frankish atrocities promptly unite Egypt against the Crusaders, inspiring Shawar to stall for time and call on Nur al-din for help in December. General Shirkuh and Saladin quickly arrive on the scene, thwarting





the Frankish invasion.

**1169.** Faced with Egyptian and Syrian opposition, Amalric retreats in January. Shirkuh promptly arranges Shawar's downfall and becomes the vizier of Egypt, but the former general dies in March after a binge of overeating. The Fatimid Caliph chooses Saladin as his uncle's successor.

In July, the promised Byzantine fleet arrives in Palestine and Amalric reorganizes his army for a fresh assault on Egypt by October. The coalition marches on Damietta, where the campaign bogs down in a protracted siege. In December, inclement weather and supply shortages force the Frankish-Byzantine coalition to abandon their assault. On the open sea an unexpected storm capsizes much of the Byzantine fleet.

**1170.** A massive earthquake strikes Northern Syria in June, devastating both Christian and Muslim cities. In December, Saladin attacks southern Palestine and then quickly retreats back to Egypt.

**1171.** During March, Amalric visits Constantinople to cement his Imperial alliance, returning by June. In Egypt, the last Fatimid Caliph perishes and *mullahs* pray for the Caliph of Baghdad as their spiritual leader. Nur al-din invades Antioch and Tripoli, demolishing two castles.

**1173.** Amalric raids in the north and Nur al-din attacks southern Palestine. Distrust and resentment grow between Saladin and Nur al-din. In Jerusalem, the Grand Master of the Assassins forms an alliance with Amalric against Nur al-din.

**1174.** Nur al-din and Amalric both die this year from disease. Raymond of Tripoli is appointed as regent of Jerusalem, while Saladin lays siege to Aleppo and claims Nur al-din's legacy. The Caliph of Baghdad quickly appoints Saladin king of Egypt and Syria.

**1175.** Saladin makes a truce with the Franks so he can subjugate Aleppo.

**1176.** Breaking the truce, Raymond invades Syria but is driven back by Saladin's





approach. The sultan returns to Egypt to consolidate his rule. In September, the Turks massacre the Imperial Army at Myrioccephalum, decisively crippling the Crusaders' most powerful ally. At Jerusalem, Princess Sibylla marries William Long-Sword, a French noble. Reynald of Châtillon is freed from prison and resumes lordship of Kerak and Montreal.

**1177.** Young Baldwin turns 16 and, though plagued by leprosy, assumes rulership of the kingdom. Sibylla's new husband dies from malaria, but not before fathering an heir to the kingdom, the future Baldwin V. Saladin attacks Jerusalem in November. The Franks rapidly reorganize and surprise Saladin's army near Ramleh, routing the invasion.

**1178.** Saladin organizes his kingdoms and stages minor raids on Palestine. The Franks rebuild fortifications in the south.

**1179.** Saladin defeats the Franks at Jacob's Ford, capturing many noble prisoners.

**1180.** After a winter famine, Baldwin arranges a two-year truce with Saladin in May. Against the king's wishes, Princess Sibylla marries a boyish young knight named Guy of Ibelyn. Intrigue between two political factions divides and distracts the Franks at Jerusalem. In September, Emperor Manuel dies at Constantinople, and the Crusaders lose their most powerful ally. The empire is plunged into turmoil.

**1181.** Reynald of Châtillon breaks the truce with Saladin by attacking a rich caravan bound for Mecca. Saladin proclaims  *jihad*  against the kingdom.

**1182.** Saladin invades Palestine in July, but is turned back at Belvoir. During August, Saladin strikes at Beirut, but retreats after Baldwin has assembled his army. In autumn, Reynald assembles a fleet and raids along the Red Sea, threatening Mecca. Saladin and the Muslim world are appalled.

**1183.** Saladin captures Aleppo in June after a three-week siege, consolidating his empire against the Franks. In September, Saladin

invades Palestine from Damascus, and unsuccessfully lays siege to Reynald's impregnable castle, Kerak.

**1184.** Saladin again besieges Kerak unsuccessfully in autumn. Factional politics plague the court at Jerusalem.

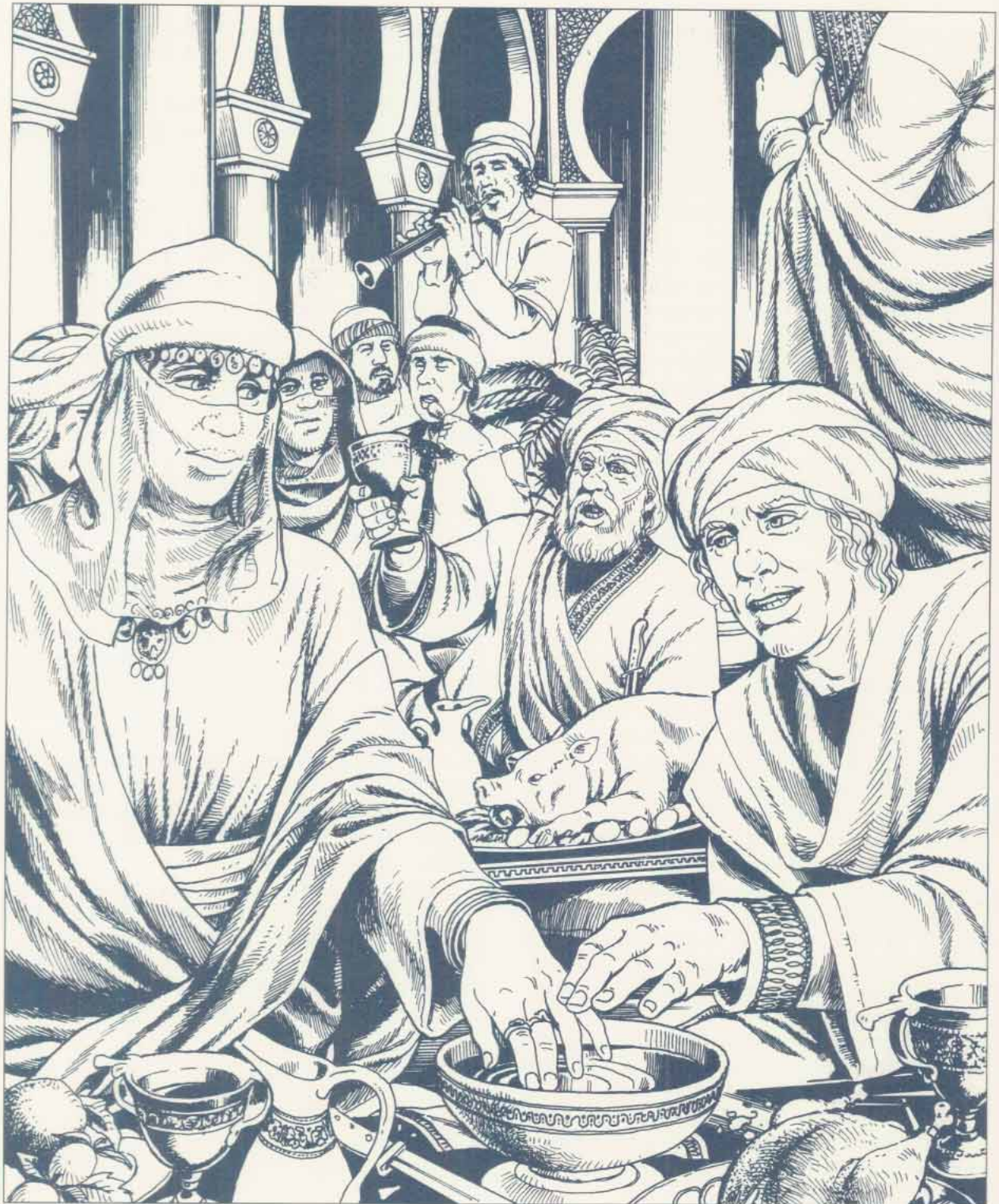
**1185.** Dying from infections caused by leprosy, King Baldwin IV prepares his will and turns over the government to Raymond of Tripoli. The king dies in March and Raymond negotiates a four-year truce with Saladin.

**1186.** The eight-year-old King Baldwin V dies at Acre from disease. Princess Sibylla's faction stages a coup at Jerusalem and proclaims her Queen. Raymond refuses to pay homage to Sibylla's immature husband, King Guy, and the kingdom becomes deeply divided by factional resentment. By the end of the year, Reynald of Châtillon once again breaks the truce with Saladin, capturing a rich caravan traveling from Cairo.

**1187.** Following Reynald's latest debacle, the northern princes of Tripoli and Antioch arrange separate treaties with Saladin. Raymond of Tripoli secretly allows Saladin's army safe passage through his lands to raid Palestine. By April, Raymond reconciles his differences with King Guy. In June, Guy assembles the forces of Palestine and confronts Saladin. During July, Saladin smashes the Christian army at the Horns of Hattin, capturing Reynald of Châtillon and King Guy. Saladin personally slays Reynald, but holds Guy for ransom.

Most of Palestine promptly capitulates to Saladin. Jerusalem surrenders in October, but Tyre repels Saladin's attacks during November, after the surprise arrival of Conrad of Montferrand from the west. Conrad holds Tyre until the Third Crusade arrives in 1192.







## Magic, Monsters, and the Supernatural

*"It is a fine story for blessed Andrew to have appeared to a man who, so I hear, frequents taverns, runs through market places, loves all manner of trifles, and seems born to be hanged at the crossroads."*

—Bohemund of Taranto, after the discovery of the Holy Lance at Antioch, 1098

During the Crusades, miracles, magical rites, and holy relics played an important part in daily life. Everyone—not just the rich, the powerful, or the pious—could be touched by the supernatural. At the siege of Antioch, for instance, the revelations of a disreputable commoner, Peter Bartholomew, drew popular acclaim and helped save the Crusaders from the Turks. Of course, Peter had his detractors (as we see from the skeptical introductory quote), but most Franks believed his stories of nocturnal visitations from the “blessed” Saint Andrew. This chapter tells how to incorporate magic and the supernatural into an entertaining Crusades campaign.

In general, the availability of magic is determined by the DM’s choice of campaign. In a historical campaign, spellcasting and magical items are greatly limited; these restrictions are loosened somewhat for a legendary campaign and abandoned almost altogether for a fantasy campaign.

### Historical

- **Priests** are allowed in this setting, but 1st-5th level spells are subject to the following modifications: 1) Somatic and material component options for all spells are in full effect; 2) Casting times are increased by one order of magnitude—1 becomes 1 round; 1 round becomes 1 turn, etc; 3) Spell durations are also increased by an order of magnitude; 4) Spell selection is limited to an appropriate spell list.

More powerful (6th-7th level spells) are treated as miracles (see below); necromantic spells are somewhat restricted; curing and healing spells are reduced in effective-

ness; Quest spells are forbidden.

- **Wizard PCs** are not allowed. For the rare NPCs, wizard spells are subject to the same limitations as priests.
- **Paladins, rangers, and bards** are stripped of all spellcasting abilities.
- **Magical items** are limited to holy relics.

### Legendary

- Priests can cast 1st-7th level spells, subject to the somatic, material component, and extended casting time restrictions. Necromantic spells are restricted (referee’s discretion). Curing (but not healing) spells have reduced effectiveness. Quest spells are treated as miracles (see below).
- Wizard PCs are limited to three kits, the Sorcerer and Sha’ir (for Muslims) and the Hakima (for Christians)—see Chapter 3. NPC wizards are uncommon in this setting (as opposed to rare in the historical campaign). Somatic, material components, and extended casting-time restrictions are still in effect. Spell durations are still increased by an order of magnitude.
- Paladins and rangers can cast spells using the spheres allowed in the *Player’s Handbook*, subject to the same restrictions as priests. Bards can cast spells, subject to the same restrictions as wizards, except that they can only learn spells from the charm and illusion schools, selected from the spell lists in this chapter.
- Magical items include holy relics and other items appropriate for the era.

### Fantasy

- Priest and wizard spells now require only standard casting times, but they still need somatic and material components. The DM may waive the lists of appropriate spells in this chapter.
- The DM can allow wizard kits (or even psionicists) as appropriate.





- Miracles and priestly quest spells are subject to the standard rules.
- Bards can learn any wizard spells from the appropriate spells list in this chapter, except those spells belonging to the invocation and necromantic schools.
- Introduce whatever magical items or relics are felt to be appropriate.

### Miracles

Throughout the history of the Crusades, the Franks were often saved by events deemed miraculous at the time. The belief in miracles—the direct intervention of God or divine agents (usually saints or angels)—is central to the Christian faith.

During the Crusades, Christian fervor reached a desperate, fanatical pitch. Literally surrounded by their enemies, the Christians felt vulnerable and despaired of ever succeeding in their divinely inspired enterprise—the defense of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. In this extreme situation unusual dreams, dramatic portents, and even waking visions gave hope and relief to the Christians. These miracles can play an important part in any Crusades campaign.

In the campaign, any character can pray for a miracle. These prayers are rarely answered in a direct manner that pleases the supplicant, but they are still answered, even if the answer is “No.” The base chance for divine intervention is 1% (a roll of 00 on d100), subject to the modifiers from Table 8. Feel free to devise additional penalties and bonuses for the campaign. Ultimately, the decision to allow divine intervention is the DM’s; use it sparingly, if at all, so the players never rely on a *deus ex machina* to save them from every predicament.

**Table 8:** Miraculous Request Modifiers

Condition	Modifier
Priest requesting 6th-7th level spell (historical setting)	+2% per PC level, -1% per spell level
Priest requesting Quest spell (legendary setting)	+1% per PC level
Supplicant good-aligned	+5%
Supplicant benefited from similar miracle during lifetime	-5% per occurrence

In a Crusades campaign, a miracle can take many forms, from the grandiose to the humble. Save dramatic miracles (earthquakes, falling stars, solar eclipses) for truly important events that affect the safety of the entire Kingdom of Jerusalem. On a more modest scale, a knight praying for guidance before a seemingly hopeless battle might receive a dream, wherein the spirit of a dead comrade counsels him about a hidden, secret weakness of the enemy. On waking, the knight may take advantage of the knowledge to either win the day or (at least) buy enough time for his companions to safely withdraw. If he does not act on the basis of the knowledge, the battle proceeds normally.

Generally speaking, a miracle should provide the PCs with a tiny, easily overlooked opportunity that helps them extricate themselves from their current danger. It should never hand them easy victory on a silver platter. In addition, some kinds of divine intervention may require noble, heroic sacrifice on the part of a player character.

Muslims also believe in miracles, but Islam takes a much more practical view of divine intervention. According to this view, Allah basically helps those who help themselves. Prayer and faith, by themselves, are not necessarily enough to secure a miracle—Muslims must make it happen through their own actions. Muslims will fight in a hopeless battle and if they succeed, they praise





and acknowledge God for the victory. They never count on divine intervention to carry the day. If it happens, it happens (such is the unfathomable will of Allah), and they rejoice accordingly. Otherwise, they make do as best they can. Refer to "Calling Upon Fate," in the *AL-QADIM Arabian Adventures* rulebook (page 82), for more guidelines on divine intervention.

### Priest Spells and Granted Powers

This section offers considerable detail on priestly powers and spells, because the Crusades were predominantly a religious enterprise. In the campaign, the Roman Catholic priesthood is one of the most powerful institutions in the Holy Land, rivalling the authority of the secular aristocracy. The priesthood's rites and ceremonies are spoken or sung in Latin, a dead language unknown to the vast majority of Franks (and undoubtedly assumed to be magical). An element of priestly faith in magic and the supernatural is appropriate, given the mention of miracles and answered prayers in the Bible, so priests can have access to clerical magic even in a historical setting.

Greek Orthodox priests resemble their Western counterparts, except that they have no access to spells that physically harm another individual or spells directly related to warfare. Thus, Greek Orthodox priests are forbidden to learn spells from the War and Combat spheres, in addition to those forbidden below. Greek Orthodox priests are strongly pacifistic and may refuse to bestow their spells on fighters in combat or those leading a protracted, violent activity. Needless to say, they are not terribly popular among the warlike Franks.

Muslim *mullahs* and religious leaders, though not part of an established hierarchy, still have access to most of the same spheres as their Christian counterparts, except War (see the *AL-QADIM* rulebook for other specific

hindrances to priest kits). In a legendary setting, they may only be granted Quest Spells (as miracles, of course) after their society has been effectively mobilized in a *jihad* against the invading Franks (c. 1150).

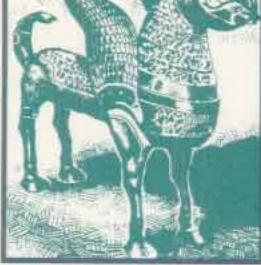
**Granted powers.** All Christian and Muslim priests have authority over undead and beings of extraplanar origin. Thus, priests can turn not only undead, but also fiends, genies, even summoned elementals. For purposes of turning, extraplanar creatures are treated as undead of equal hit dice, regardless of the being's alignment. Thus a 10 HD efreeti can be turned as a ghost. Note that this ability works on the gen, familiars, and spiritual allies of witches and sha'ir.

**Priest spells.** Even in a historical campaign, Latin priests retain their ability to cast certain magical spells of 5th level or lower. In a historical or legendary setting, these magical abilities are subject to some stringent restrictions, however. First, the optional somatic and material component rules are in full effect, and casting times are increased by an order of magnitude (spells having casting times expressed only in numerals now require that many rounds, rounds become turns, turns become hours). In a fantasy setting, casting times return to normal, but material and somatic components are still required for most spells.

In addition, the most powerful rites and ceremonies—6th-7th level spells and Quest spells—are restricted to divine intervention, except in a legendary or fantasy setting. Priests can still learn them in a historical campaign, but these miraculous prayers are not always answered. If the priest's prayers are not favorably answered, subsequent supplications avail the priest nothing.

To compensate for these handicaps, extend the duration of each spell by an order of magnitude in a historic or legendary setting. For instance, spells that normally last rounds, now last turns; turns become hours, and hours become days. Of course, in a fantasy





setting, remove this advantage once casting times return to normal.

**Necromantic spells.** The Resurrection lies at the foundation of Christian faith, and it is perhaps the religion's most sacred miracle. In a Crusades campaign, the only way to bring back the dead is by obtaining a 14th-level priest to cast *resurrection* (the lower-level *raise dead* spell is not on the approved spell list). In a historical campaign, this powerful spell is granted only as a miracle. This reinforces the notion that a resurrection is an incredibly rare event in the Christian tradition, granted only when the recipient has a major religious quest to perform. At the DM's discretion, other 7th-level necromantic spells might still be granted, but only under miraculous conditions, even in a legendary campaign.

For instance, the Patriarch of Jerusalem (a 15th-level priest) attempts to *resurrect* the king, who has fallen in battle while defending the Holy Sepulchre from the Saracens. The Patriarch learns and practices the rites of the spell (effectively "memorizing" it) and casts it on the body. Consult Table 1. The chance that the spell will be granted is 1% (base)–7% (spell level)+30% (caster level)+5% (caster alignment)=29%. If the spell succeeds, it is considered a miracle. Otherwise, it is time to prepare the funeral rites. No further *resurrection* attempts ever succeed.

**Curing spells.** In a historical or legendary setting, the biggest limitation on priest spells is their reduced ability to heal and cure wounds and afflictions. (Disease in the campaign may be easily simulated by having a character in disease-causing conditions make a Constitution check; failure means the victim is struck by the nonmagical equivalent of a *cause disease* spell, debilitating or fatal.)

In the Middle Ages, disease and poorly treated wounds led to countless deaths in war, and the Crusades were no exception. Over half the kings of Outremer died quite young from health-related causes. To preserve this historical balance, cure spells (such

as *cure disease*, *cure blindness*, or *cure deafness*) have only one chance in a victim's lifetime to affect a given affliction.

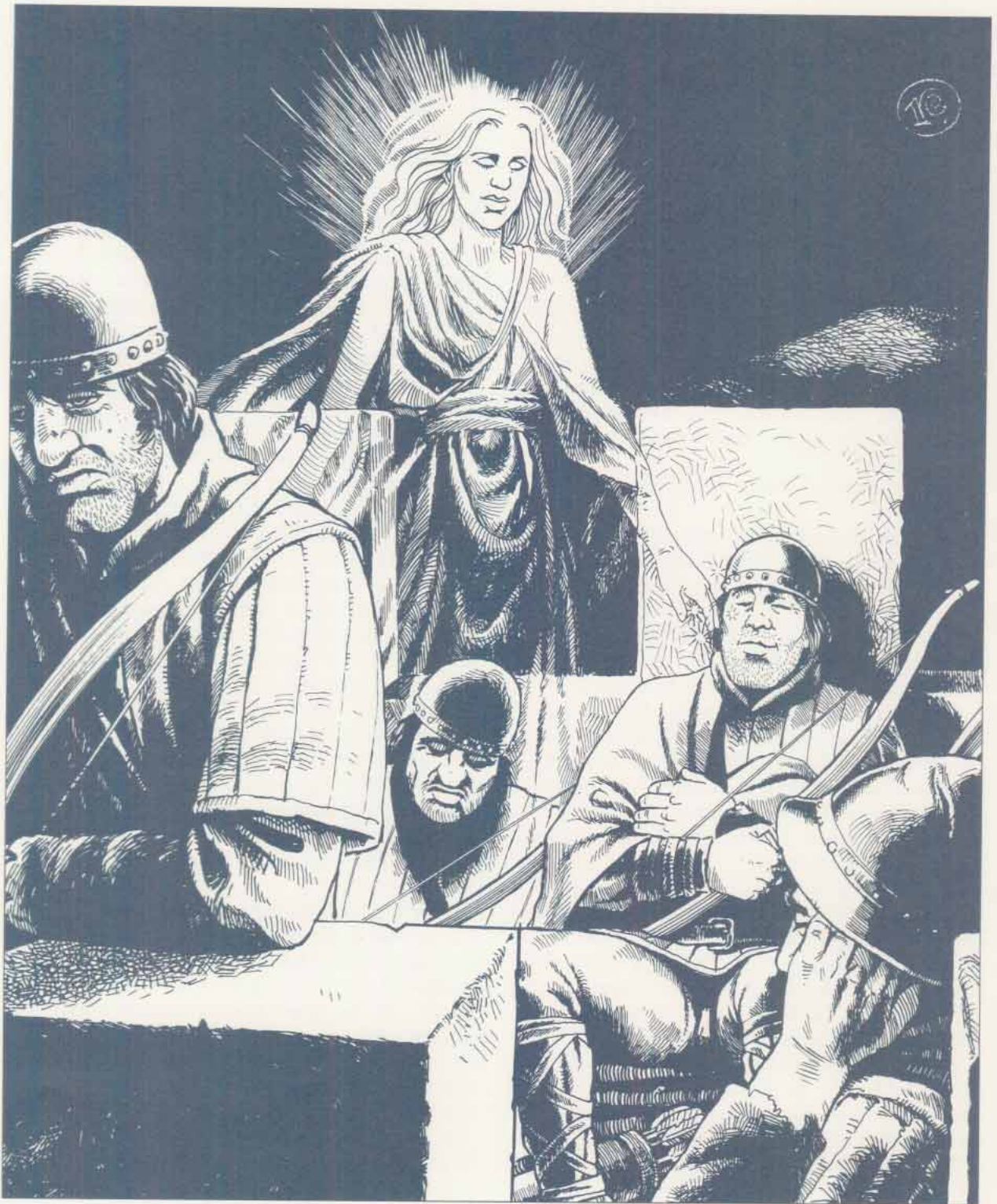
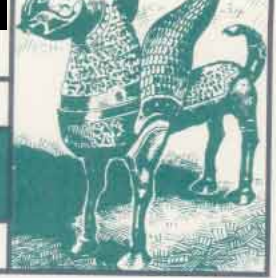
Furthermore, the victim must make a saving throw vs. poison to be cured. If the save fails, this spell can never remove the affliction unless it is cast by a more powerful priest than the first. Even if the spell fails, however, the disease goes into remission for a length of time the DM decides, depending on the severity of the condition. Penalties on the saving throw may be imposed for particularly virulent afflictions or conditions in an advanced stage. Advanced leprosy, for instance, though not virulent, might impose a –4 penalty on the save. In this way, Jerusalem can still be ruled by its Leper King, Baldwin IV, even in the presence of spellcasting priests.

For instance, a wounded knight asks a 5th-level priest to cure his malaria. The cleric casts *cure disease*, but the knight fails his saving throw vs. poison. Though the disease is not cured, it goes into remission for a few days, permitting the warrior to fight in an upcoming battle. Afterwards, when the malady returns, the knight asks for the local Patriarch—a 10th-level priest and more powerful than the first—to recast the spell. This time, the knight makes his save, and the disease slowly goes into remission but does not return. If the knight had failed this save and a more powerful priest were not available, then he would have to suffer the natural ravages of the illness.

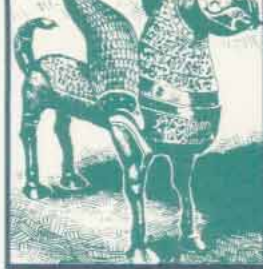
**Healing spells.** In a historical setting, healing spells only restore 1d4 hit points worth of damage—not 1d8. Thus, *cure light wounds* restores only 1d4 points, *cure serious wounds* restores 2d4, and *cure critical wounds* heals 3d4 points of damage. The more powerful *heal* spell is unaffected by this restriction, because as a 6th-level spell it is treated as a miracle in a historical setting, requiring divine intervention to succeed. These restrictions are lifted in legendary and fantasy campaigns.

**Quest spells.** Only a few of these rites from









the *Tome of Magic* rulebook are suitable for a Crusades campaign: *fear, contagion, health blessing, interdiction, revelation, robe of healing, sphere of security, and warband quest*. They are not available in a historical campaign, and they are miracles in a legendary setting. In a fantasy setting, they are granted according to the stipulations set forth in *Tome of Magic*.

### Table 9: Unavailable Priest Spells

Not all spells in the *Player's Handbook* and the *Tome of Magic* are suitable for a Crusades campaign. All reversed spells, such as *cause fear* or *cause light wounds*, are unavailable.

**Animal, Astral, Chaos, Guardian, Numbers, Plant, Thought, Time, Travelers, Wards:** All spells.

**Charm:** *Mystic transfer, imbue with spell ability, meld.*

**Combat:** *Magical stone, shillelagh.*

**Creation:** *Animate object, blade barrier, heroes' feast, wall of thorns, changestaff, chariot of sustarre.*

**Divination:** *Analyze balance, extradimensional location, reflecting pool, commune with nature, consequence, magic font, thoughtwave.*

**Elemental:** *Log of everburning, dust devil, fire trap, flame blade, heat metal, meld into stone, pyrotechnics, cloud of purification, elemental forbiddance, spike stones, transmute rock to mud, wall of fire, conjure fire elemental, fire seeds, animate rock, conjure earth elemental, fire storm, transmute metal to wood.*

**Healing:** *Fortify.*

**Law:** *Calm chaos, rigid thinking, compulsive order, impeding permission, legal thoughts.*

**Necromantic:** *Animate dead, feign death, raise dead, breath of life, mind tracker, reincarnate.*

**Protection:** *Barkskin, line of protection, anti-plant shell, repel insects, anti-animal shell.*

**Summoning:** *Animal summoning I to III, call woodland beings, aerial servant, animate object, conjure animals, word of recall, conjure earth elemental, spirit of power, creeping doom, succor.*

**Sun:** *Blessed warmth, rainbow, the great circle,*

*sol's searing orb.*

**War:** *Caltrops, tanglefoot, illusory artillery, gravity variation, illusory fortification, shadow engines.*

**Weather:** *Fairie fire, control temperature 10' radius, weather stasis, rainbow.*

### Wizardry

Scholarly magic is based on arcane knowledge. With the proper incantation and the right material components, the sorcerer unlocks their sympathetic magical power to achieve some tangible result. No one is born with this knowledge. Like any scientific skill, it requires years of disciplined study and experimentation. At the time of the Crusades, wizards of this type were exceedingly rare in the Western world, which was only beginning to emerge from the Dark Ages. In the world of Islam, however, scholars, scientists, and mathematicians had been expanding the theories of the Ancient Greeks for centuries.

As a result, the vast majority of scholar-mages in a Crusades campaign are Muslim. In a historic or legendary setting, these scholarly mages should belong to the Sorcerer kit. In a fantasy campaign, the DM may decide to allow other kits and specializations from the *Player's Handbook*. Elementalists from the *Tome of Magic* are perfectly acceptable in such a setting. Wild magic, however, should not be allowed, except perhaps in the context of a "backlash," the result of a failed spell (see below).

The DM may make an exception to this rule for a character with a Western (Christian) background, especially in a fantasy campaign. In such a rare case, the PC wizard must have gained some training from a Muslim mentor at some point during his career. This is not entirely unrealistic. Such a cross-cultural exchange could have happened on the island of Sicily. Originally conquered by the forces of Islam during the 9th century, Sicily was reconquered by the Normans in the





decades before the First Crusade. Because the Normans had the good sense to retain the Muslim institutions (including the universities), Sicily quickly became the center for Western scholars to learn the secrets of Arabic scholarship.

In the campaign, scholarly magic depends on the accurate pronunciation of magical phrases, accentuated by proper ceremonial gestures, and often powered by an important material component.

The scholar mage must record the formulae for all his spells in a special spellbook called a *grimoire*. The wizard memorizes his spells from the selection available in his grimoire, but unlike the standard rules, unless the book is open before him during casting, the wizard must make an Intelligence check to cast his spell. If the wizard fails the Intelligence check, he fumbles the incantation; the spell fails and is lost from memory. At the DM's discretion, some negative side effect may also occur if the spellcasting is botched (use the Wild Magic table in *Tome of Magic*). This kind of "backlash" is rare, however, especially if the wizard always casts spells with the guidance of his spellbook.

Under this "historical" magic system, it is impossible to directly read a spell from a spellbook if it has not been already memorized. Think of memorizing a spell in this fashion as preparing for a recitation. Without the text in front of him, it is possible the caster might skip a word and ruin the effect. So long as the text is in front of the caster, such mistakes are easily averted. As with priest spells, the necessity for careful, meticulous precision requires the extended casting times for a historic or legendary campaign. To compensate for this drawback, spell durations are extended by an order of magnitude, similar to priest spells. In a fantasy setting, casting times and spell durations are normal; the wizard never needs to check if he cast his spell successfully.

**Witchcraft.** This form of magic is com-

pletely different from standard sorcery. It requires no memorization of spells and no elaborate rules for spell casting. However, the art does require extensive contact with the invisible spirit world, which provides the hakima (witch) with all her magical powers. A hakima is basically a western form of sha'ir, detailed in the *AL-QADIM Arabian Adventures* rulebook.

#### Table 10: Unavailable Wizard Spell List

In addition to all Wild magic, the following wizard spells from the *Player's Handbook*, *Tome of Magic*, and *AL-QADIM Arabian Adventures* are inappropriate for a historic or legendary Crusades setting:

- 1st level: *find familiar*, *fire burst*, *Murdock's feathery flyer*, *Nystul's magic aura*, *Tenser's floating disk*.
- 2nd level: *Maximilian's earthen grasp*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *Leomund's trap*, *stinking cloud*, *Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter*, *web*.
- 3rd level: *Alamir's fundamental breakdown*, *augmentation (I to II)*, *far reaching (I to III)*, *fireball*, *Lorloveim's creeping shadow*, *Maximilian's stony grasp*, *Melf's minute meteors*, *minor malison*, *monster summoning (I to VIII)*, *squaring the circle*, *watery double*.
- 4th level: *dilation (I to II)*, *divination enhancement*, *Evard's black tentacles*, *greater malison*, *ice storm*, *Leomund's secure shelter*, *minor spell turning*, *Mordenkainen's celerity*, *Otiluke's resilient sphere*, *Rary's Mnemonic Enhancer*, *wall of ice*.
- 5th level: *Bigby's interposing hand*, *cloudkill*, *cone of cold*, *conjure elemental*, *demi-shadow monsters*, *Khazid's procurement*, *Leomund's lamentable belaborment*, *Leomund's secret chest*, *lower resistance*, *mind fog*, *Mordenkainen's faithful hound*, *safeguarding*, *Von Gasik's refusal*, *wall of force*, *wall of iron*.
- 6th level: *Bigby's forceful hand*, *Bloodstone's spectral steed*, *chain lightning*, *demi-shadow magic*, *Forest's fiery constrictor*, *Lorloveim's shadowy*





*transformation, Otiluke's freezing sphere, summon shadow, Tenser's transformation.*

7th level: *Bigby's grasping hand, Bloodstone's frightful joining, delayed blast fireball, forcecage, Drawmij's instant summons, intensify summoning, limited wish, Malec-Keth's flame fist, Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion, Mordenkainen's sword.*

8th level: *Abi-Dalzim's horrid wilting, Bigby's clenched fist, Gunther's kaleidoscopic strike, incendiary cloud, Otiluke's telekinetic sphere, Otto's irresistible dance, Serten's spell immunity, unleash monolith.*

9th level: *astral spell, Bigby's crushing hand, glorious transmutation, meteor swarm, Mordenkainen's disjunction, wish.*

### Sorcery or Psionics?

Psionics provides an alternative to standard magic to create an entertaining, fantasy Crusades setting. Several noted fantasy authors have already explored the concept of mixing psionics, a medieval world, and a powerful Church. The "Deryni" novel series by Katherine Kurtz (see the bibliography in the Appendix) describes a psychically advanced race intimately intertwined with a devoutly religious culture similar to Western Europe. A bit closer to the topic at hand, two works by Judith Tarr (*Alamut and the Sword and the Cross*) describe another psionically endowed race taking part in the Crusades and daily life, politics, and warfare in Outremer. These works show that with a little finesse, psionics can work in a fantasy Crusades setting. Keep in mind that these psychic powers have no place in a historical or legendary setting.

To preserve game balance (and keep the number of spellcasters or psionics to a bare minimum), allow either wizards or psionics in the fantasy campaign—never both. For instance, the legendary Merlin—the advisor to king Arthur—can be interpreted as either a wizard or a psionist, depending

on the source. Some of the traditional fairy tales portray Merlin as simply a standard magician, but according to Malory's *Mort d'Arthur* (15th century), Merlin was a prophet endowed with strange psychic powers (probably a psionic clairvoyant in game terms). In a fantasy campaign, the DM can let regular PCs develop into wild talents, according to the rules outlined in the *Complete Psionics Handbook* (CPH).

### Table 11: Forbidden Psionic Powers

The following psionic powers from the CPH are inappropriate for either psionists or wild talents in the campaign:

**Clairsentience:** feel light, feel sound, hear light, radial navigation, see sound.

**Psychokinesis:** create object, animate shadow, control flames, control light, control sound, control wind, control sound.

**Psychometabolism:** death field, life draining, aging, biofeedback, body weaponry, chameleon power, chemical stimulation.

**Psychoportation:** probability travel, summon planar creature, teleport other, astral projection.

**Telepathy:** incarnation awareness.

**Metapsionics:** appraise, psychic clone, retrospection.

### Folklore and Monsters

When the Franks arrived in the Middle East, they brought with them their ideas about magic and the supernatural, and of course their own folklore as well. The literature and fairy tales of the medieval Frankish aristocracy (the only people besides priests who bothered to write anything down during that era) show a preoccupation with the Carolingian and Arthurian legends and *chansons de geste* (songs of epic deeds). These fairly monotonous and repetitive tales usually revolve around some knight, a quest of some





sort, and a wicked archnemesis (usually a witch or an old, tyrannical king).

One major quest assigned to knights in these tales was the fabled "Quest for the Holy Grail"—the search for the legendary cup (sometimes depicted as a chalice) used during the Last Supper. According to legend, the Grail was imbued with magical healing and restorative powers and could only be discovered by a questing knight with a pure heart. Many Arthurian romances revolved around the search for a holy relic.

In these stories the knight vanquished hordes of monsters (mostly giants, trolls, and dragons), outwitted cunning fairies, and rescued at least one fair maiden from unjust imprisonment by the conclusion. If gamers are interested in the classical elements of Carolingian folklore, see HR3 *Charlemagne's Paladins*. Except as a guide to social values and the general expectations of the Franks, Western European folklore plays only a minor role in a Crusades campaign. The Holy Land was part of the Arab world, and its inhabitants embraced an entirely different cultural tradition from the Franks, who were only a tiny minority in a foreign land. In the context of the Crusades, these Western themes take on an entirely different flavor when they are contrasted—and ultimately combined—with elements of Arabian folklore. One of the most alluring aspects of a Crusades campaign is the opportunity to fuse Western and Eastern cultures in the unique society of Outremer.

Perhaps the best guide to Arabian folklore lies in the enchanting tales of *The Arabian Nights*. Use these stories as a guide in determining the kinds of fantastic monsters appropriate for a legendary or fantasy campaign. In general, most of the creatures discussed in the *MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM AL-QADIM Appendix* (MCAQ) can be used as-is only in a fantasy campaign. For a legendary campaign, modify some monsters considerably, as follows:

**Dragons.** Surprisingly, dragons do have a connection with the Holy Land. According to



legend, a dragon used to live in the mountains of Lebanon, south of Beirut, during the 8th century. The dragon's poisonous breath used to seep down the rolling hillsides at night, killing many villagers who lived in the valleys by the sea. One day the villagers begged a Byzantine knight named George to destroy this creature, and the warrior rode up into the hills and speared the beast as it lay sleeping in its cavernous lair. George was later canonized by the Greek Orthodox church and venerated as a saint.

Clearly, dragons such as these are not world-ravaging firestorms, like Tolkien's Smaug and the dragons of the *MONSTROUS MANUAL* accessory. Arabian dragons, sometimes called vishaps (see MCAQ), are much weaker, more cowardly, and more devious than the Western fire-breather. In game terms, the reptile from the legend of St. George was probably a weaker cousin of the green





dragon, or perhaps a cross between a green dragon and a vishap. As in any campaign, they should be very, very rare.

**Giants, ogres, ogre magi, trolls.** In Arabian folklore, these monsters live in the deep wilderness far from any human habitation, but they are far more intelligent and amenable to conversation than the standard variety from the *MONSTROUS MANUAL* tome. They may certainly kill and devour a lone traveler, but if the visitor approaches the giants (or their kin) with humility and respect, the monsters may offer help. According to legend, the price for such monstrous assistance varies. A giant might accept a monetary bribe, but more likely it requires the human's temporary servitude in exchange for its service. Many giants and ogres have powerful magical abilities, similar to ogre magi.

**Lycanthropes, shape-shifters, and other disguises.** Standard lycanthropes have no place in the campaign. If gamers have the



MCAQ, the werelion and werehyena are appropriate lycanthropes for an Arabian setting. Shape-changers can be found both in the wilderness and cleverly hidden in human society.

Disguise and shapechanging are central themes in Arabian tales, where kings masquerade as beggars and horrible monsters look like helpless old ladies. Because one can never be sure of a stranger's identity, most Arabs treat their guests with unrivaled hospitality. One should not speak badly of the sultan in the presence of strangers and should show old women a measure of respect.

The *silat* is a more traditional shapeshifter from Arabian lore. Many stories revolve around these old women with strange and terrible powers; adapt the hag from the *MONSTROUS MANUAL* tome for this purpose if the MCAQ is not available. In one tale, a little girl wanders from her house and falls into a deep hole somewhere in her back yard. There she discovers a disgusting, wrinkled old lady. Because she was brought up correctly, the girl treats the old lady with respect, brushes her hair, and cleans up the hole. As the girl prepares to leave, the old woman gives her a beautiful piece of gold jewelry as a present for her kindness. When the girl reaches home, she shows the jewelry to her spoiled sister, who is immediately jealous. The avaricious sister learns of the hole in the back yard and rudely confronts the old woman, demanding a similar piece of jewelry for the privilege of living on her family's land. The old lady silently complies, giving the jealous girl a golden ring, but as the sister climbs out of the hole, her treasure disappears and her head is transformed into that of a donkey. Needless to say, no family members ever bother the hole-dwelling crone again.

**Genies.** These elemental spirits are a classical feature, almost a trademark, of the magical tales in the *Arabian Nights*. They can be bound to serve humanity, such as in the popular tale of Aladdin and his lamp, or they can





be the fierce enemies of unfortunate mortals, such as the fearsome *jinn* of the story "The Fisherman and the Genie." The genies of the AD&D game and the AL-QADIM campaign reflect this ambivalent dual relationship with humanity. In a fantasy Crusades campaign, *jinn* may be either good or evil.

Historically, Muslim religious leaders and scholars have taken an extremely negative view of the *jinn*, which they viewed as malicious spirits of the wilderness. Devout Muslims placed genies in the same category as demons. These scholars believed that all genies were devoted to (at worst) physically harming and (at best) deceiving mortals by distracting honest men and women from service to the merciful Allah. If the *jinn* were truly good, these scholars argued, their spirits would soar up to Paradise and serve the Almighty, not remain on Earth, dealing with mortals.

A close reading of the *Arabian Nights* upholds this rather pessimistic view of *jinn*. Bound or enslaved genies are always magically coerced into serving humanity. They do not do this of their own accord. Indeed, the first reaction of a freed *jinn* (in "The Tale of the Fisherman and the Genie") is to attempt to murder the unfortunate fool who released him.

In yet another tale ("The Merchant and the Genie"), when a merchant stops to drink at a pool, the genie imprisoned there attempts to kill him. By swift thinking, the merchant persuades the genie to spare his life only long enough to return home and say farewell to his family. Once the merchant has prepared himself for death and returns to the oasis, the genie reconsiders his earlier decision and allows the mortal to go free. For performing a good act of his own free will, an ancient curse placed on the genie is lifted and the *jinn* goes free, presumably soaring up to Heaven to join the rest of his brethren.

It would seem, from these tales, that the only genies remaining in the world were evil or recalcitrant, either bound into magical

items or imprisoned by spells to secluded corners of the wilderness, serving a lengthy term as punishment for some past misdeeds.

Which view of genies is appropriate? Do both good and evil genies exist on Earth, or do only the malicious ones remain? That is for the DM to decide in a Crusades campaign. In a legendary campaign, genies should be as rare as dragons; in fantasy, they can be as numerous as one wishes.

Regardless of their role in the Crusades campaign, however, genies remain on the blacklist of both Islam and Christianity. All *jinn* (regardless of their alignment) can be commanded and turned by Muslim holy men and Christian priests, who have authority over all spirits, undead, and extra-planar creatures. According to both religions, willingly consorting with a genie is considered a grievous sin.

Of course, this official censure from the established religions only forces the sha'irs and the owners of enslaved genies to be much more discreet about their supernatural allies. In a legendary campaign, genies are either always *invisible* or *polymorphed* into human shape. They never assume their natural form, except in the barren tracts of wilderness where there are no witnesses (except, perhaps, the spirit's latest victims).

**Undead.** Banshees and vampires are the only forms of standard undead inappropriate to a Crusades campaign. From the MCAQ, the great ghul is a good example of an Arabian undead. These monsters may feast on corpses, but they still appreciate a little respect just like anyone else. Great ghuls, like silats and giants, may spare a humble mortal (read "potential victim") who approaches them with a proper greeting or speaks with due reverence.

**Angels and evil spirits.** In the medieval world, most people strongly believed that divine and diabolical agents mingled invisibly with human society. Good spirits, angels, and saints were responsible for divine inspi-





ration and often miraculous salvation. For instance, during the siege of Antioch, many Crusaders saw angels in the sky, protecting them from the hail of Saracen arrows. Unexplained good fortune was often attributed to the work of angels.

Just as the agents of God moved freely in the world, the destructive forces of evil also directly influenced society. Any form of bad luck, for instance, might be attributed to a curse laid by invisible evil spirits. Disease and insanity were caused by demonic forces.

In the campaign, the DM can handle these supernatural forces in two ways. First, adapt extraplanar creatures from the PLANESCAPE™ campaign to serve as “angels” and “evil spirits” for the campaign. While on Earth, these beings usually remain invisible. Their presence is undetectable except by priests or the rare wizard.

The DM may also decide to treat these entities as unfathomable spiritual forces: essentially a plot device. Mortal weapons—even magical ones—have absolutely no effect on these angels and spirits. One would sooner expect a sword to affect the rain or harm an earthquake. In this view, angels and spirits never defend or attack mortals directly. Invisible angels might save a floundering ship by quelling the terrible winds, and disguised spirits might inspire people to commit crime, but ultimate salvation and destruction in the campaign should fall to the mortals that inhabit it.

### Magical Items

Given the rampant superstitious beliefs in monsters and spirits, magical items—especially protective ones—were popular during the Middle Ages. Gems and crystals, in particular, were believed to have magical and medicinal properties. By carving runes into these gems, setting them into jewelry or even weaponry, artisans could create magical items.

By definition, therefore, the majority of medieval magical items are set with gems and inscribed with magical runes, either Latin or Arabic, depending on the origin. This includes most rings, amulets, brooches, pearls, periapts, scarabs, talismans, etc. In addition, many magical items gained their mystical powers through holy relics (see the following section). For instance, a *ring of sustenance* might be set with a ceramic jar fragment from the Biblical wedding feast in Cana, where water was turned into wine. Use this technique to dress up otherwise ordinary magical items from the DMG.

Although miscellaneous magical items should be exceedingly rare, enchanted weapons and armor are more common in a Crusades campaign, especially among the Franks. According to some stories, Richard the Lionheart stopped in Italy along the way to the Holy Land, where he was presented with Excalibur, the legendary sword of King Arthur. Saladin was said to fight with a scimitar of incredible sharpness, forged from Damascene steel, which could slice through weightless gauze and silk pillows laid across its razor edge.

To determine magical items in the campaign, use the following Table 12, not Table 88 from the DMG. The DM can adapt most magical items from the DMG for a Crusades campaign. In a historical or legendary setting, however, some of these items lack the flavor of the period. Hence Table 13, below. These are general guidelines—feel free to modify Table 13 to suit the mood and flavor of a particular setting (especially fantasy).

As in any campaign, strictly control all magical items. This strategy greatly heightens their value and importance in the campaign.





**Table 12:** Magical Items for the Crusades

d100 Roll	Category
01-05	Potions and Oils
06-07	Rings
08	Rods
09-10	Staves
11-12	Misc. Magic: Jewels & Jewelry
13-18	Misc. Magic: Cloaks & Robes
19-20	Misc. Magic: Boots & Gloves
21-22	Misc. Magic: Girdles & Helms
23-24	Misc. Magic: Bags & Bottles
25-28	Misc. Magic: Candles, etc.
29-30	Misc. Magic: Household Items
31-32	Misc. Magic: Musical Inst.
33-60	Armor and Shields
61-97	Weapons
98-00	Holy Relics

**Table 13:** Unavailable Magical items

**Potions and Oils:** *Animal control, climbing, diminution, dragon control, ESP, gaseous form, giant control, human control, levitation, oil of acid resistance, oil of disenchantment, oil of elemental invulnerability, oil of etherealness, plant control, rainbow hues, treasure finding, undead control.*

**Rings:** *Blinking, chameleon power, elemental command, feather falling, human influence, mammal control, mind shielding, ram, shooting stars, telekinesis, wizardry, x-ray vision.*

**Rods:** *Absorption, beguiling, cancellation, resurrection, rulership.*

**Staves:** *Command, magic, power, woodlands.*

**Misc. Magic: Jewels & Jewelry:** *Amulet of the planes, necklace of missiles, pearl of power, scarab vs. golems, talisman of the sphere, talisman of Zagyg.*

**Cloaks & Robes:** *Cloak of arachnida, cloak of displacement, cloak of elvenkind, cloak of the bat, cloak of the manta ray, robe of eyes, robe of scintillating colors, robe of stars.*

**Boots & Gloves:** *Boots of elvenkind, boots of lev-*

*itation, boots of varied tracks, boots (winged), bracers of brachiation.*

**Girdles & Helms:** *Girdle of femininity/masculinity, helm of brilliance, helm of telepathy, helm of teleportation, helm of underwater action.*

**Bags & Bottles:** *Bag of tricks, portable hole.*

**Candles & Ointments:** *Dusts (all), incense of obsession, ioun stones, Nolzhur's marvelous pigments, smoke powder, sovereign glue, stone of controlling earth elementals.*

**Household Items:** *Braziers (all), mattock of the titans, maul of the titans, mirror of opposition, Murlynd's spoon, saw of mighty cutting, spade of colossal excavation.*

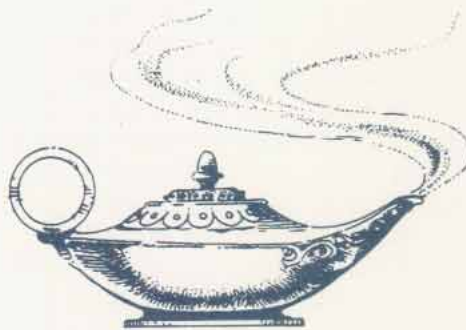
**Musical Instruments:** *Chimes (all), horn of bubbles, horn of the tritons, lyre of building, pipes of pain.*

**Armor and Shields:** *Only armor types available to the Crusades campaign can be found. Thus, there is no magical plate mail, field plate, etc.*

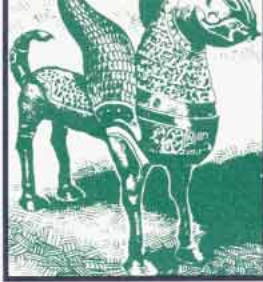
**Weapons:** *Nets (all), tridents (all), sword of the planes.*

### Holy Relics

A holy relic can be a potent magical item in its own right. In the campaign, holy relics can be physical remains, personal possessions, and sanctified objects of a saint, apostle, or prominent religious figure. The physical remains might include bits of bone, hair, or







drops of blood, preserved in a crystal vial; for personal possessions, consider the threads of an apostle's robes, the veil of a female saint, or even a simple belt or common sandals. Use imagination when devising holy relics for the campaign. Consider why this relic is holy or inherently magical, who once owned it, and what its powers are.

As a general rule, most relics should invoke one or more clerical spells, available 1/day (1st-3rd level spells), 1/week (4th-5th level spells), or 1/month (6th-7th level spells). Note that in a fantasy setting, these clerical powers are in no way restricted by the Forbidden Spells list. Tailor the powers of the relic according to its individual history and background. These powers are not activated automatically. The user must chant aloud a special prayer or ceremony peculiar to the relic, requiring 1 round per level of the relic's desired power. This prayer is almost never inscribed on the relic itself. (How could it be, in the case of a thread from a saint's garment?) This "activating" prayer must be researched in a major library equipped with the appropriate religious texts. Alternatively, some priest spells, such as *divination* or *commune*, might give clues to the wording of this prayer.

In addition, the invoker of the relic's blessing must be of the religion that holds the relic holy. Once activated, the blessing or magical effect can affect anyone, regardless of their religion or ethnicity.

If the relic activates a 6th-7th level clerical spell in a historical campaign, or a Quest spell in a legendary campaign, the relic's power depends on the miraculous intervention of a divine power. The needs of the story should motivate the success of this prayer. But if the DM has no preference whether the divine power intervenes, use Table 8, with the caster's level equal to the most powerful individual invoking the power of the artifact. The DM may allow the combined levels of all present believers to improve the caster's effective level, thus making the invocation of a relic

into a cooperative activity.

Unless the DM is running a full-tilt fantasy campaign, the staging of magic using a holy relic calls for a subtle approach. Avoid lightning, levitation, eclipses, and similar flashy effects. Instead, aim for a sense of solemn serenity, pristine virtue, and confrontation with the sacred. The relic's effects should spring from the user's unshakable faith, an island of calm in what is probably a turbulent crisis.

A relic's effects in historical or legendary campaigns should allow for alternative, mundane explanations, although drastic coincidence is certainly permissible. When the relic's blessing is invoked, the opposing army calls off the siege and retreats, but for a mundane cause: to put down a coup back home. Or the characters' armies take comfort in the presence of the relic and fight with greater heroism, perhaps through the relic's blessing or because of a straightforward morale boost. Maybe the finger bone of Saint Denis really *did* cause the earthquake that shattered the enemy's fortifications—but it might have been a stroke of luck instead.

Obviously the invocation of a holy relic should be reserved for the adventure's climax, or for some pivotal circumstance. Stage the relic's discovery, activation, and disposition as amazing, dramatic events. The characters should never regard it as a mere routine magical item.





## Tales of the Crusaders

*"You must suffer many things in the name of Christ, wretchedness, poverty, nakedness, persecution, need, sickness, hunger, thirst, and other things of this kind."*

—Pope Urban II, 1095

Pope Urban II launched the First Crusade during the summer of 1095. Five months earlier, an envoy of the Emperor Alexius I had arrived in Rome to plead for assistance against the Turks, who were threatening the Byzantine Empire. Urban II, who had been courting a more open relationship with the Eastern Church for the past 10 years, soon called for a Crusade to liberate both Constantinople and the Holy City of Jerusalem from the "pagan" Muslims.

With his first sermon to an assembly of bishops in southern France, Urban II started a crusading movement that would span nearly seven centuries of history. In this chapter, we examine the goals, highlights, and major accomplishments of the early Crusades to Palestine.

### The First Crusade: 1095-1101

Pope Urban II started the Crusade with two clear objectives. First, the forces of Western Christendom would liberate Eastern Christians by driving the Turks out of the Byzantine Empire. After that, the Crusade would open a safe pilgrimage route through the Middle East and recapture the Holy City of Jerusalem. During 1095, the Pope toured his native kingdom of the Franks, preaching the Crusade. Born into a French noble family around 1035, Urban well understood the mindset of the clergy, aristocracy, and common people in his home country. The response to Urban's call was enormous, far greater than he had originally intended or even wanted.

Urban envisioned a tightly organized Frankish expedition, under the strict control of the church. To this end, the Pope appointed

Adhemar, the Archbishop of Le Puy, to arrange the crusade in 1096. The faithful from all classes of society converged in southern France, sewing two strips of red cloth over their outer garments to proclaim their honored status as pilgrims. The crusaders believed that they were taking up the cross and following Christ, as had been called for in the New Testament. Bishop Adhemar was joined by barons, knights, priests and commoners. Only monks were forbidden to participate. All other elements of medieval society were welcome to join the expedition and help free the Holy Land from the Muslims.

Meanwhile, a popular preacher named Peter the Hermit was inspired by Urban's message and carried it to his native land of Germany, unbeknownst to the Pope. Peter preached the crusade across the country and quickly amassed his own "People's Expedition" at Cologne. Without any of the careful preparations characteristic of the Frankish crusade, the People's Expedition, sometimes called the Peasants' Crusade, crossed Eastern Europe during the summer of 1096 and arrived at Constantinople in August. Their journey was far from peaceful, as their inadequate planning forced them to rob and pillage the countryside for food and water, even after they entered the Byzantine Empire. Along the way they vented their hostility to Jews through murder and atrocities.

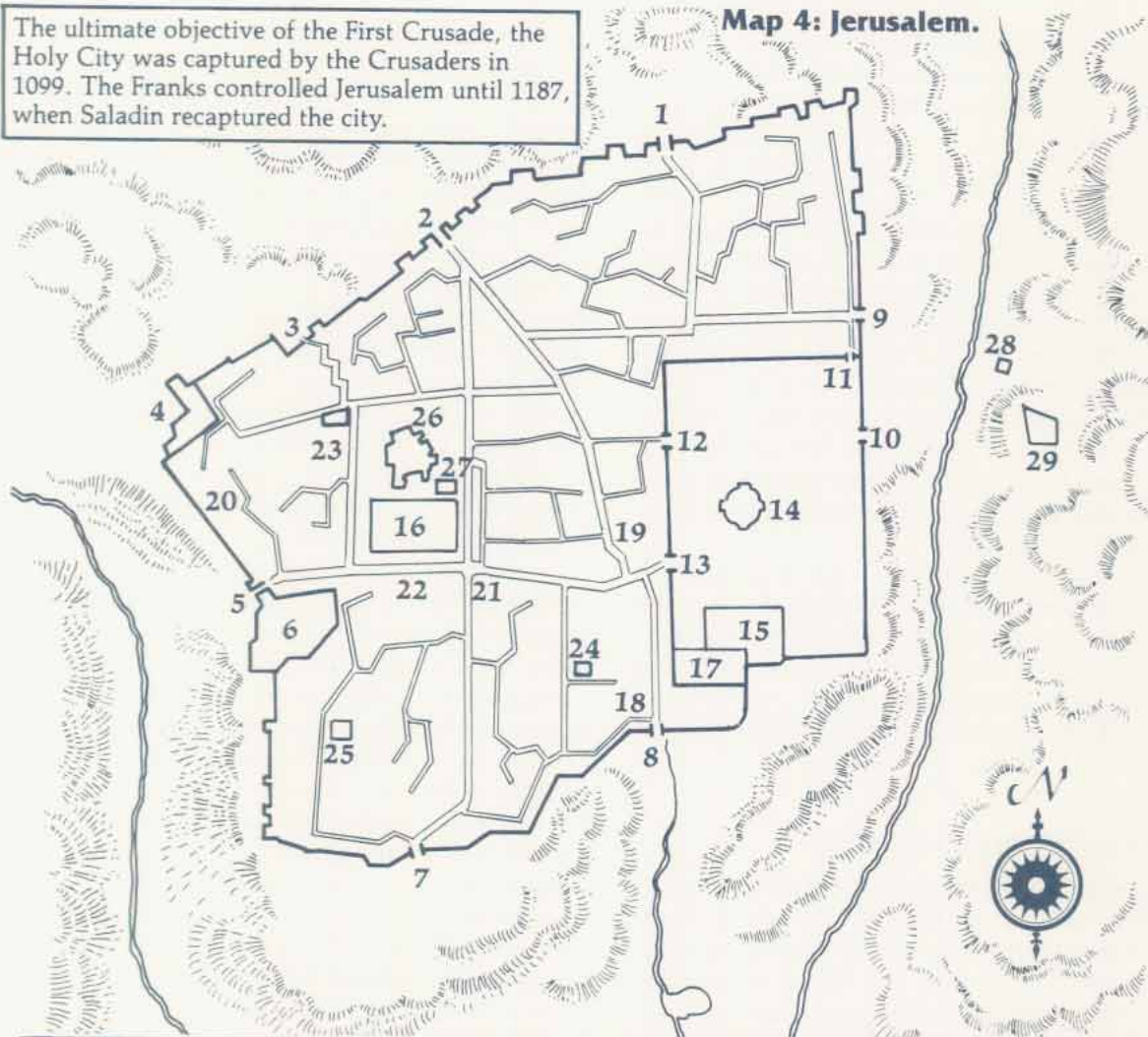
Once the People's Crusade arrived at Constantinople, they continued to disrupt the Imperial peace, burning Greek Orthodox churches and looting rich suburbs. Despite these crimes, Emperor Alexius welcomed Peter to his palace with all the honor of a visiting dignitary and gave provisions to the crusaders. The emperor warned Peter of Turkish tactics and urged him to wait for the Frankish expedition, but the Crusaders were impatient and slowly began moving toward the Turkish frontier. After crossing the Bosphorus in October, the careless crusaders were ambushed by Kilij Arslan. The Turkish





The ultimate objective of the First Crusade, the Holy City was captured by the Crusaders in 1099. The Franks controlled Jerusalem until 1187, when Saladin recaptured the city.

**Map 4: Jerusalem.**



**Legend**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Gate of Flowers                        | 15. Al-aqsa Mosque (base of the Templars)             |
| 2. Gate of the Column of Saint Stephen    | 16. Hospital of Saint John (base of the Hospitallers) |
| 3. Postern (rear gate) of Saint Lazarus   | 17. Royal Palace                                      |
| 4. Tancred's Tower                        | 18. Cattle market                                     |
| 5. Jaffa Gate                             | 19. Public baths                                      |
| 6. Tower of David                         | 20. Grain market                                      |
| 7. Sion Gate                              | 21. Money exchange                                    |
| 8. Gate of Siloam                         | 22. Fowl market                                       |
| 9. Gate of Jehoshaphat                    | 23. Palace of the Patriarch                           |
| 10. Golden Gate                           | 24. Church of Saint Mary of the Germans               |
| 11. Gate of Paradise                      | 25. Church of Saint James                             |
| 12. Gate of Grief                         | 26. Church of the Holy Sepulcher                      |
| 13. Beautiful Gates                       | 27. Church of Saint Mary of the Latins                |
| 14. Dome of the Rock (see Map 1, page 12) | 28. Tomb of the Virgin                                |
|   | 29. Garden of Gethsemane                              |





sultan swept down out of the hills, easily annihilating the surprised and terrified crusaders. Saved by a Byzantine detachment, Peter and a small fraction of his followers returned to Constantinople alive.

The Western leaders that made up a second wave of the First Crusade were much more practical than the careless pilgrims of Peter's expedition. The princes gathered their forces; raised taxes to purchase arms, horses, and supplies for the long journey; and arranged for the government of their estates during the extended absence. In southern France, Adhemar was joined by Count Raymond of Toulouse; they made the journey to Constantinople together. In western France, Duke Godfrey of Lorraine assembled his brothers, Eustace and Baldwin, his loyal knights, and set off for the east with a well-equipped army. Finally, an infamous Norman knight, Bohemund of Taranto, joined the crusade with his small private army in April 1096.

Though much better armed than the People's Crusade, these Frankish expeditions proved equally unruly during their separate journeys to Constantinople. After the Byzantine navy conveyed them across the Bosphorus in early 1097, the Crusaders marched on the Turkish capital of Nicea. At the time, Kilij Arslan was occupied in wars with his neighbors, but after his easy victory over the first wave of disorganized Crusaders, the Turkish emir was not terribly concerned by reports of the second expedition. Kilij Arslan's overconfidence and lengthy delay proved to be costly mistakes. Nicea promptly surrendered in June. Fearing the Franks' dreaded reputation, the city rulers turned the keys over to Emperor Alexius, not the Crusaders. Despite the Frank's fury at not being allowed to loot and pillage the city, Nicea represented their first significant victory.

Kilij Arslan was understandably furious at this setback, and he planned an ambush in the Crusaders' path, in the valley of Dorylaeum. When the vanguard approached the

Turkish trap in October, the impatient sultan mistook it for the Crusaders' entire army and attacked, promptly surrounding the smaller force. The Turks were so intent on their prey that they did not notice the approach of the main Crusader army from Nicea until too late. The Turks were soundly defeated in battle, and the sultan was forced to flee into the hills. Less than a month after their departure from Constantinople, the Franks had visited two successive defeats on the "pagan" Turks.

The Crusader's hardships were only beginning, however. With most of his army destroyed, Kilij Arslan could not afford another direct confrontation with the Franks. He could predict their route across Anatolia, however, and harried every mile of their advance using guerrilla tactics. He stripped the land and poisoned the wells in the Crusaders' path, cut off their supply lines from Constantinople, and watched them crawl across the forbidding Anatolian countryside in the oppressive heat of summer. Pilgrims, horses, and knights soon began dying from the heat, starvation, disease, and thirst.

The tribulations of Anatolia converted the Crusade into a fanatical, mobile monastery. Had not God allowed the Devil to test Job's faith, by visiting his faithful servant with horrible afflictions? Throughout their misery in Anatolia, the Crusaders began to feel that God was preparing them, like Job, for a sacred mission by forging them into a special instrument of His will. During Turkish skirmishes, the Franks began to see visions of angelic warriors. They identified these visions as holy saints like St. George, hovering protectively in front of their army and defending them from the Turks. In dreams the Franks encountered the peaceful spirits of their slain comrades, giving them comfort and urging them to persevere. The fanatical Crusaders were convinced that they had been chosen to complete the liberation of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem.

When the Crusaders broke through Anato-





lia and arrived outside the walls of Antioch in the fall of 1097, their numbers had been decimated and their leaders impoverished. Adhemar convinced the princes to invest the legendary Biblical city through the winter, and the Crusaders soon sprawled around the five miles of Roman walls. After months outside Antioch, the Crusaders suffered even more from famine and disease. Soon the number of horses in the Christian camp dwindled to less than 20, depriving the knighted class of their hereditary status.

While his countrymen approached Antioch, Baldwin, one of Duke Godfrey's adventurous brothers, separated from the main army with a small contingent of knights, intending to found a small principality along the Orontes River. He soon befriended the Armenians, Christian mountain folk of southern Anatolia with no love for the Turks. As Baldwin traveled through the countryside in 1097, the small Turkish garrisons in the region either fled or were soundly defeated by his well-armed knights. In February of 1098, he was adopted by King Thoros, an heirless Armenian monarch, during a strange, ancient ceremony in which Baldwin and Thoros rubbed their hairy chests together under the same woolen shirt. When Thoros died suspiciously in March, only a few weeks after the adoption, Baldwin claimed the city of Edessa and the surrounding lands as his personal domain. Because Thoros had been unpopular for his subservience to the Turks, the Armenians welcomed Baldwin as their new leader.

Back at Antioch, the Turkish sultan of the city, Yaghi-Siyan, was desperately trying to induce his former enemies, in the neighboring cities of Mosul, Damascus, and Aleppo, to rescue him from the Crusaders. The Antiochene ruler had betrayed the Emir Ridwan of Aleppo in the previous year, so the nefarious Yaghi-Siyan could not count on help from his nearest neighbor. After substantial monetary inducements, the *atabeg* Kerbogha of Mosul started assembling his armies in the spring.

Outside Antioch, the Crusaders' siege dragged on, despite low morale, desertions, and rumors of Kerbogha's advancing army. Fortunately for the Crusaders, the cautious Kerbogha paused to besiege Baldwin at Edessa, delaying his arrival at Antioch by several weeks. During that time, Bohemund of Taranto arranged for a traitor in Antioch to admit him and some fellow knights into the city. Before long, the adventurers opened the gates of the city and the Crusaders promptly captured Antioch. By June 2, 1098, all Turks in the city had either fled or had been slaughtered along with the ruthless Yaghi-Siyan.

As Kerbogha's army disengaged from its profitless siege in Edessa and set off again toward Antioch, the Crusaders' morale sunk to a new low. The besieged city had exhausted stores when the Franks captured it, and the vast majority of knights still had no horses.

On June 5, the *atabeg's* huge and magnificent army arrived outside Antioch. The supernatural quickly intervened on the Crusaders' behalf. Barely a week after the capture of Antioch, one of the common pilgrims, a rather disreputable fellow named Peter Bartholomew, approached Count Raymond and Bishop Adhemar with news of visions he had received from St. Andrew. In his dreams, the impatient saint had ordered Peter to search for the Holy Lance. This spear, which had pierced Jesus' side as he was crucified, now lay buried in the Church of St. Peter in Antioch. It would let the Crusaders defeat all their Muslim enemies in Palestine.

Adhemar was skeptical of Peter, a lascivious rogue and a known scoundrel. Count Raymond, however, accepted Peter's account and prepared for the excavations. Meanwhile, another crusader—a young priest named Stephen of Valence—had another vision, in which Christ appeared to him directly and said that the Crusaders had lost their holy purpose and become distracted by debauchery and fornication. If the Franks would amend their ways, Christ promised to send





them help in five days. Bishop Adhemar accepted this vision as genuine and convinced the princes of the Crusade to swear that they would not abandon Antioch. Hearing news of their princes' resolve, morale improved considerably among the Crusaders, who were by now vigorously defending the city against the repeated assaults of Kerbogha's forces.

A few days passed, and excavation began in the Church of St. Peter. At first the workers discovered nothing, and Count Raymond went away in disappointment. Suddenly Peter Bartholomew leaped into the massive pit and soon discovered a rusty piece of iron, which he proclaimed a fragment of the Holy Lance. Though some workers were skeptical, a reputable noble at the scene swore that he had gripped the sacred relic while it was still partially buried in the ground.

When they learned of the Holy Lance's discovery, the Crusaders were ecstatic. As Count Raymond fell ill, leadership of military affairs passed to Bohemund, and he prepared to attack Kerbogha. Not only was St. Andrew (in Peter's visions) urging the Crusaders to attack, but the Turkish *atabeg* was experiencing serious difficulties keeping his army together. Considerable friction between the Turkish leaders and Arab soldiers had only been worsened by Kerbogha's fruitless assault on Edessa at the start of his campaign. There were soon mass desertions in the *atabeg's* army.

After a night of fasting and prayer, the Franks prepared to battle the Turks on June 28. Bishop Adhemar celebrated mass at dawn, and a procession of white-clad priests led the Christian army out of Antioch onto the battlefield, triumphantly brandishing the Holy Lance. When the Franks charged into battle, they believed they saw angelic warrior-saints appear before them, turning aside the hail of Turkish arrows and leading them fearlessly into combat. Kerbogha's demoralized army, unprepared to face this kind of unwavering religious fanaticism, quickly broke, and the

entire Muslim army soon fled in full rout back to Mosul. The Christians saw their stunning victory as a miracle, yet another sign of God's holy favor for his Chosen.

As the victorious Franks began planning their final approach and capture of Jerusalem, the ultimate goal of the Crusade, it became clear that at least three of their leaders would not join them. Baldwin of Edessa had a new domain to protect on the eastern frontier, and Bohemund had proclaimed himself the Prince of Antioch. Adhemar, the spiritual leader of the Crusade thus far, would not accompany the Franks to Jerusalem either. The Bishop of Le Puy died on August 1 after an epidemic of typhoid swept through Antioch.

In early 1099 the remaining Franks, led by Count Raymond and Duke Godfrey, marched down the coast to Jerusalem. By now all of Palestine had heard terrible tales of the "invincible" Crusaders from Muslim refugees. They learned with horror of an incident at Ma'arra, where the ferocious Crusaders were said to have committed acts of cannibalism after slaying the town's inhabitants. Without exception, the Turkish and Egyptian rulers of cities along the Mediterranean coast sent friendly envoys to the Crusaders, bearing lucrative tribute of provisions and horses, in hopes the Franks would pass them by. The Crusaders were intent on reaching Jerusalem, and so they accepted the generous gifts of the Muslims, ignoring the coastal cities for the time being.

By early June, the Crusaders assembled outside the massive walls of the Holy City, the final goal of their epic journey. At the time, Jerusalem was under the command of a Egyptian governor named Iftikhar, who was not so easily cowed by the Franks' terrible reputation. As the Crusaders made no secret of their ultimate destination, he had ample time to prepare for the siege. Iftikhar had expelled all the Christians from the city, poisoned all the wells outside Jerusalem, and sent envoys to Cairo for reinforcements.





When the Crusaders arrived, they threw themselves against the walls of the city but were quickly repulsed. For a month the Franks suffered under the brutal summer sun while they erected siege machinery for a more serious assault. Confident that a Cairene army was coming to his rescue, Iftikhar waited patiently behind the city walls. However, the Egyptian forces arrived much too late to save Jerusalem. On the night of July 13, the Crusaders dragged their siege towers up to the walls and forced their way into the city. Throughout the night and the entire following day, the Crusaders massacred every Muslim and Jewish inhabitant who could not flee, including women and children. The triumphant leaders of the Crusade chose Godfrey of Lorraine as the new King of Jerusalem.

From the perspective of both the Pope and the Franks, the First Crusade was a major success. The Crusaders had established three

lasting Christian states in Palestine—the County of Edessa, the Principality of Antioch, and the Kingdom of Jerusalem—and recaptured the Holy City from the “pagans.” However, the slaughter of innocents in Jerusalem would forever cloud negotiations among the Franks, Muslims, and Jews.

The Crusaders had also driven back the Turks who threatened Constantinople, but this victory was short-lived. In 1101, Kilij Arslan finally avenged his earlier humiliating defeat at Dorylaeum by surprising and annihilating a third wave of Crusaders. Once again the Turks closed overland routes to Palestine through Anatolia. Despite this major setback, the Crusaders would remain in Palestine for nearly 200 years.

As for the folk hero of the Holy Lance, Peter Bartholomew, he was soon discredited and accused of being a charlatan. He died of severe burns after trying to uphold his sincer-





ity in a trial by fire. The Holy Lance was carried by pilgrims back to Constantinople, where it disappeared. The Byzantines *already had* a Holy Lance, discovered centuries before and authenticated by their clergy.

### The Second Crusade: 1145-48

At the time of the First Crusade, the Muslim world was fragmented and disorganized. In 1127, the Seljuq sultan of Baghdad appointed the ruthless but competent Muslim *atabeg* Zengi to the regency of Mosul and Aleppo. The general spent the first few years of his tenure consolidating his rule in Syria, but thereafter Zengi proved a formidable nemesis to the fledgling County of Edessa.

As early as 1132, Zengi and his chief lieutenant, Sawar, began a campaign of raiding and conquest in the northern Crusader states. Three years later, Zengi and Sawar had either captured or reduced all of Edessa's frontier defenses. The pair now embarked on separate, bolder raids, deeper into Frankish territory. Because of internal political squabbles and limited manpower, the Franks proved unable to stop Zengi's campaign of destruction and conquest. In a decisive blow to the Crusader states, Zengi captured the northern city of Edessa at the end of 1144.

Bad news travels quickly. Within a month of the defeat, the Queen-Regent Melisende of Jerusalem had dispatched an embassy to Rome, who asked the Pope for a new Crusade. Forty years earlier, a crusading furor had spread through Europe after the capture of Jerusalem, but the disastrous fate of the third wave of Crusaders in 1101 had considerably dampened the West's enthusiasm. Although pilgrims still arrived at the Holy Land in droves, only a few small military expeditions regularly embarked to Palestine. It took the debacle at Edessa to shock the West into a new frenzy. In December of 1145, the Pope urged King Louis of France to lead a new Crusade to save eastern Christendom,

promising the Crusaders redemption from all sins and temporary suspension of their earthly debts.

Although the king was eager to take up the Cross, his barons showed little enthusiasm. King Louis asked a young abbot of legendary eloquence, Bernard of Clairvaux, to help convince his reluctant vassals. As a preacher, Bernard (later Saint Bernard) had been gifted with almost unbelievable charisma. During March 1146, the king assembled his vassals at Vélézay; news that the incomparable Saint Bernard would preach there drew a huge crowd of curious spectators from across France. At the end of Bernard's sermon, the assembly erupted in a religious furor, calling for strips of material so they could sew crosses on their garments and take up the Cross. The king's formerly aloof barons now eagerly pledged themselves to the Crusade.

For the rest of the year, Saint Bernard spread news of the Crusade, traveling to western France, Flanders, and finally reaching Germany, where he eventually convinced the reluctant King Conrad and his entire court to take up the Crusade as well. Conrad spent the spring gathering his vassals and their armies.

Even though the Turks had closed the land routes to Palestine since 1101, both kings preferred to travel by land rather than risk a sea voyage. The leading naval power at the time, the perfidious Roger of Sicily, was so disreputable that the Pope did not even bother to invite him on the Crusade. It is doubtful that even Roger's navy could have accommodated all the French and German Crusaders, 50,000 soldiers, knights, and pilgrims.

The massive German and French contingents departed for Constantinople in early 1147, arriving about a month apart during the fall. Konrad's German soldiers were rowdy and bellicose, much like the first Crusaders, and quickly antagonized the Byzantines by disregarding Emperor Manuel's authorized routes through his domain. They raided the





countryside and attacked Imperial police. The Germans even antagonized the French when Louis's army arrived, denying them supplies. Disgusted and enraged by the Crusader's behavior, Manuel secretly accepted a truce with the Turks, promising not to aid the Crusaders once they crossed into Anatolia. From the outset the French, Germans, and Byzantines resented and distrusted each other. This would prove disastrous for the Crusade.

The French and German contingents were conveyed separately across the Bosphorus in autumn 1147. Konrad's spirited army, ignoring the suggested routes of Emperor Manuel, stormed ahead of the French in October and quickly blundered into a Turkish trap near Dorylaeum. Konrad's proud forces were wiped out; the German king barely managed to salvage a tenth of his army and escape to Nicea, where the Frankish army massed in November.

During the next four painful months, the combined French and German army struggled across the mountainous Anatolian coastline, plagued by winter storms and constantly harassed by the Turks. Faced with mounting Turkish resistance, the Crusade's leaders began to assemble a fleet when they reached Atallia so they could make the rest of the journey by sea. As soon as there were enough boats to accommodate the family and bodyguard of each king, the royalty promptly sailed to Palestine, abandoning the bulk of their armies to complete the remainder of the difficult journey without their leadership. Conrad landed at Acre in April and traveled to Jerusalem without further incident, where he was welcomed by Queen-Regent Melisende, her son King Baldwin, and their intrigue-ridden court.

King Louis's trip to Jerusalem went far less peacefully. When they arrived at Antioch in March 1148, they were received by Prince Raymond, who was not only Louis's cousin, but also the uncle of his beautiful queen, Eleanor of Aquitaine. Lady Eleanor was one of the most celebrated figures of the medieval

world, renowned not only for beauty but also keen wit, perceptive wisdom, and patronage of the arts. A small entourage of troubadours, poets, and philosophers followed her everywhere, even on the Crusade. She helped inspire the ideal of courtly love and gallantry that would later become the romantic standard of European knighthood.

Eleanor was certainly much more intelligent than her dour, pious husband, Louis, and she found the entire Crusade a dreadful experience. During her younger days in Aquitaine, she was rumored to have been quite intimate with her dashing uncle, and from the outset of her arrival at Antioch, the sympathy between Eleanor and Raymond was evident to all. People soon began to suggest that the Queen was spending perhaps too much time alone with the handsome Prince of Antioch. Louis grew jealous.

When the French monarchs arrived at Antioch, Raymond's Principality was fighting a defensive war against the Saracens. After the start of the Crusade, the *atabeg* Zengi was murdered by a frightened eunuch and his realms divided among his three sons. The most dangerous of these, from the perspective of the Crusaders, was the cunning and pious warrior Nur al-din, who displayed all his father's military genius but none of his ruthless brutality. Though he had only the resources of Aleppo at his disposal for the time being, Nur al-din called for a *jihad* against the Franks, a holy war to expel the Crusading foreigners. The faithful of Islam flocked to his banner in Aleppo. By the end of 1147, Nur al-din had claimed all the lands and strongholds east of the Orontes river.

Raymond was understandably concerned about Nur al-din's agenda. Despite Raymond's sensible arguments, Louis refused to help his cousin in a campaign against Nur al-din. Eleanor tried to convince Louis of the wisdom in Raymond's strategy, but this only inflamed the king's jealousy. Louis stubbornly insisted on completing his pilgrimage





to Jerusalem before embarking on any campaign against the Saracens.

After all the ordeals of the Crusade, Eleanor finally reached the limit of her endurance. On the day before Louis departed for Jerusalem, Eleanor announced that she would not accompany her husband south, but rather would remain in Antioch with her uncle. Furthermore, Eleanor revealed that she would seek a divorce as soon as she returned to France. Completely humiliated, the king kidnapped his rebellious wife that evening and carried her with him to Jerusalem. Appalled by his cousin's behavior, Raymond refused to lend any support to Louis's ill-fated Crusade.

Once all the Crusaders had assembled in Jerusalem, they quarreled for a month over the target for their campaign. They finally decided to attack Damascus. Though undeniably a rich prize, Damascus was also the only city that had proved willing in the past to ally with the Franks. The Damascene *atabeg*, Unur, was shocked to learn of the Crusaders' advance on his city. He reluctantly dispatched an embassy to Nur al-din at Aleppo, requesting his aid against the Franks. Nur al-din was pleased to comply, having expected the Crusaders to retaliate against him for his father's capture of Edessa.

The young King Baldwin assembled his forces and marched with Louis and Conrad to Damascus. After they surrounded the city and captured the outlying areas, the leaders began to argue bitterly over how they would divide Damascus. During the delay caused by this bickering, Unur managed to recapture the lost territory and drive back the Crusaders. Meanwhile, Baldwin heard reports that Nur al-din was rapidly approaching from the north with a vastly superior force. Louis and Conrad urged Baldwin to stand and fight the Muslims, but the local leaders, familiar with Saracen tactics, recognized their own perilous position.

Now caught between Nur al-din's larger army and Unur's forces from Damascus, the

Crusaders would be torn to pieces if they remained. At last realizing his dilemma, Baldwin ordered a withdrawal back to Palestine—but Unur would not let the Crusaders leave so easily. He dispatched a company of horsebowmen to harry their retreat. As the hail of arrows fell, picking off stragglers and alarming horses, some of the Crusaders panicked, turning the retreat into a rout.

Disgusted by the entire fiasco, Conrad departed by ship for Europe within a month of the defeat. Louis remained a while longer in Palestine, as he had little to look forward to after his return except a divorce from his estranged wife. He dallied in Outremer for a few months, making pilgrimages to holy places before he too returned home. His marriage to Eleanor of Aquitaine was annulled in 1152, and two months later she married Henry Plantagenet, later King Henry II.

Just as the First Crusade was a stunning success, the Second was a humiliating disaster. After a year of careful preparations and many months of hardship crossing the hostile wilderness of Anatolia, the Second Crusade arrived in Palestine to fight a fruitless military campaign that lasted only four days. Despite their lofty intentions, the leaders of Christendom proved incapable of working together, and their divisiveness let the Saracens triumph. Saint Bernard, confused by the failure of this noble enterprise, would later find it far easier to blame the Byzantines for the Western defeat than see the true cause of the debacle. Needless to say, this epic failure dampened crusading fever for many years to come. It would take the fall of Jerusalem, 40 years later, to draw Crusaders back.

### The Third Crusade: 1187-92

Political intrigue continued to plague Outremer during the decades after the doomed Second Crusade, while the forces of Islam united under the leadership of Nur al-din. By his death in 1174, he had established an empire









that included Mosul, Aleppo, Damascus, and Cairo—a tight ring enclosing the Crusader States and threatening their existence. After Nur al-din's death, the humble governor of Cairo, Salah ad-din, known to the Crusaders as Saladin, slowly gathered the reins of his former master's empire.

Saladin is perhaps the best-known and most-glamorous figure of the Crusades. Like Nur al-din, he inspired fanatical loyalty in his followers by strictly adhering to the *Sharia*, the holy laws of Islam, in both personal and public life. Unlike his former master, Saladin retained his humility, modesty, and compassion after his meteoric rise to power.

For instance, a young mamluk once entered Saladin's tent and asked him to sign a message. Though Saladin was exhausted and asked the slave to return later, the mamluk thrust the paper in his face, insisting that his master sign. When Saladin protested that he didn't have an inkwell, the slave, growing impatient with the single most powerful leader of Islam, pointed out the bottle behind him. Saladin turned around and exclaimed, "By God, you're right." Fetching the ink himself, he promptly signed the message.

Countless anecdotes like this, chronicled by his friends and advisors, portray Saladin as a modest, compassionate, honorable, and generous man. News of tragedy or suffering often moved Saladin to tears, and he always strictly honored his word to both Muslim and Christian alike. He never broke a truce with the Franks, though the Crusaders routinely betrayed their oaths as circumstances warranted. Saladin was incredibly generous with his wealth, to the frustration of his treasurers. Saladin's advisers maintained a secret treasury so they could pay for armies and maintain the state government even after one of their lord's particularly generous moods. Saladin was never motivated by greed or lust for power. He devoted his whole life to fighting for Islam and driving the Franks from Syria.

Faced with Saladin's increasing military

might, the Frankish leaders continued their divisive intrigues. In 1187 Saladin lured their small army into battle beneath a double-spire mountain called the Horns of Hattin, near the shores of Lake Tiberias. The Franks had marched all day to the lake under the brutal July sun, expecting to find water once they arrived. Instead, they found Saladin's rested and much larger army waiting for them. Rather than withdrawing, as some prudent Franks suggested, the more fanatical, religious leaders insisted on fighting to exterminate their hated enemy. As the Crusaders approached, Saladin set fire to the dry grassy plain, and the smoke rolled down to choke the already thirst-maddened infantry. The Franks fought bravely, but they were vastly outnumbered, weakened by thirst, exhausted by the sun, burned by fire, and blinded by smoke. Their army was almost annihilated. Saladin captured the King of Jerusalem, along with Christendom's most sacred relic, the True Cross.

The Battle of Hattin broke the back of the fragile Kingdom of Jerusalem. The Franks had drained their garrisons to field the army, and after the battle the kingdom was defenseless. By the end of the year, all of Outremer except for Antioch, Tripoli, and Tyre had quickly capitulated to Saladin. Unlike the Crusaders, who massacred the inhabitants of Jerusalem after their victory, the sultan was compassionate and magnanimous. He allowed the Franks to purchase their freedom for a small tribute of 10 dinars per man, 5 per woman, and 1 per child; he ransomed Jerusalem's poor for a much smaller lump payment. (It appears that, for unknown reasons, several thousand poor went unredeemed and were probably sold as slaves, along with many foot soldiers.) Saladin's treasurers were mortified to see the Patriarch of Jerusalem depart with a small caravan of treasure, stripped from his villa and the cathedral. The rich priest paid 10 dinars for his release just like everyone else. Saladin





even dispatched a squad of cavalry to escort the priest's treasure to Tripoli, so it would be safe from bandits on the road. Saladin opened the Church of the Holy Sepulcher to Christian pilgrims within a week of his victory.

Saladin's mercy and generosity soon came back to haunt him. Streams of Frankish refugees converged on Tyre, swelling the ranks of defenders in the impregnable stronghold. It had taken Count Raymond nearly 2,000 days to capture the city after the First Crusade. Fortunately for the Franks, they were blessed by the unexpected arrival of a noble and charismatic pilgrim, Conrad of Montferrat. He helped organize the city defenses by the time Saladin arrived outside its walls in November. Saladin called off the siege of Tyre to consolidate his victory in the rest of Palestine, and in the interim, supplies, arms, and reinforcements streamed into the city by sea.

After the devastating loss of Jerusalem, the Archbishop of Tyre sent emissaries to Pope Gregory VIII in Rome, begging for a new Crusade. The desperate defenders of Tyre would wait four long years for the response. In the interim, Saladin released the former King of Jerusalem, Guy of Lusignan, who promptly sought out a priest to release him from his oath to Saladin, that he would depart Outremer forever. Guy met immediate resistance from Conrad in Tyre, who was not impressed by the only surviving leader to blame for the loss of Jerusalem. Despite Conrad's disdain, Guy found supporters and left Tyre in 1189 to reconquer his kingdom. He got as far as the city of Acre, where his forces quickly bogged down in a siege. Supported by Pisan, Danish, and Frisian fleets, Guy managed to thwart Saladin's attempts to dislodge him.

After learning of the disaster at Hattin, Pope Gregory dispatched letters to all the churches of Western Christendom by the end of 1187. At the time King Henry II of England and King Philip Augustus of France were engaged in a long and bitter war. Though the

kings declared a truce in early 1188 and swore to take up the Cross, their protracted preparations and mutual distrust delayed their departure for months.

In contrast to the quarreling French and English kings, the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick I Barbarossa, took up the Cross in March. Barbarossa, nicknamed for his bushy red beard, was a legend in his own time. In his youth, he had unified the lands of Germany and northern Italy into a massive realm, proclaiming himself Holy Roman Emperor in 1153. By the time of the Crusade, he was over 70 years old, but that in no way diminished his vigor and determination. Contemporary chroniclers of the Crusade were astounded by the size of Frederick's army, a huge national force for the Middle Ages: between 100,000 and 150,000 knights and soldiers.

When he departed Germany in May 1189, Frederick took the difficult overland route to the Holy Land, despite the dangers of the Turks and the forbidding Anatolian countryside. Though Barbarossa's forces clashed with Byzantine authorities and suffered losses to the Turks while crossing Anatolia, the tremendous army had almost reached Antioch when the Holy Roman Emperor suddenly died in June 1190 while crossing a river in Cilicia. Perhaps he drowned in the strong current, or the cold water might have given the aging emperor a heart attack. Whatever the reason for Frederick's death, after his followers dragged his body from the river, the largest army in Europe began to dissolve, right on the threshold of the Holy Land. Frederick's charisma alone had held his army together, and with him gone, his distraught princes, barons, and knights dispersed with their private armies and unbelievably began the long march home. Though "Frederick's Crusade" never reached the Holy Land, the threat of his imminent arrival kept Saladin from committing all his forces to the siege of Acre, which dragged on through the rest of the year.

Meanwhile, back in Europe, the turmoil at





the courts of France and England continued. Henry II died in 1189 and his son, Richard I "Lionheart" ascended to the throne of the Plantagenet empire, which included not only England, but almost half of France as well. Understandably, Philip Augustus of France was Richard's sworn enemy, and not until late in 1190 did the two leaders depart simultaneously for the Holy Land by sea. After wintering in Sicily, they arrived apart at the ongoing siege of Acre in 1191.

Like Saladin, Richard Lionheart has become a legendary, romanticized figure of the Crusade. We have already met his mother, Eleanor of Aquitaine. Richard was as dashingly handsome as his mother was beautiful, a charismatic leader, skilled dancer, musician, and singer. A powerful and renowned fighter, in many ways he epitomized the flower of Christian knighthood and chivalry. But Richard's personality also had a much darker, cruel side. Prone to wild mood swings and sudden bursts

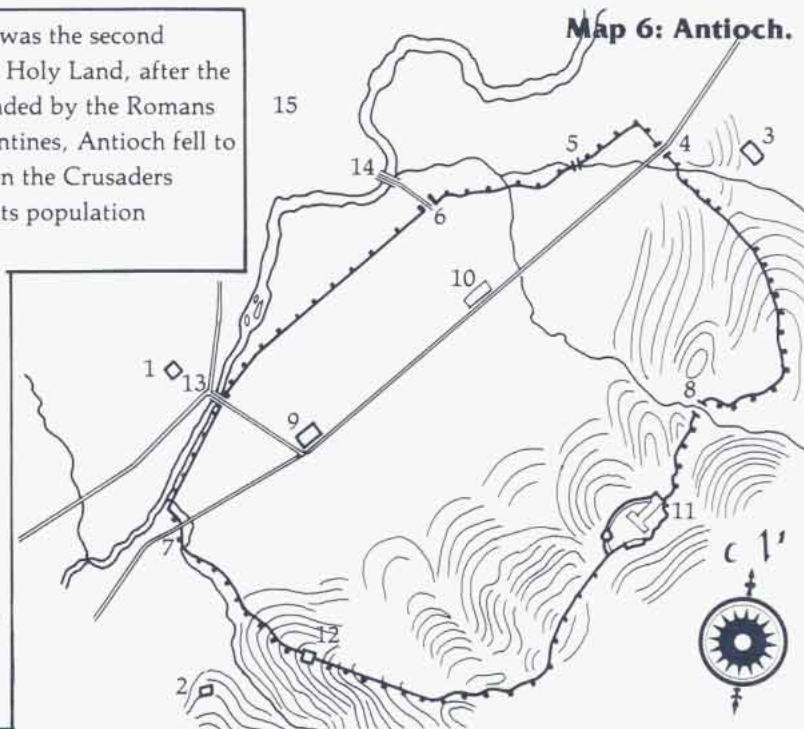
of furious rage, he was equally capable of both uncommon kindness and savage brutality. Richard was sometimes reckless and often irresponsible. For example, after leaving Sicily for the Holy Land, Richard chose to delay his arrival for months by conquering Cyprus, an island of farms and monasteries with little strategic significance. (In retrospect, however, Cyprus did provide the Crusaders with a much-needed supply base—perhaps Richard knew what he was doing after all.)

By the time Richard arrived at the siege of Acre, Philip of France had already erected massive siege machinery and was preparing a final assault on the city. King Philip could not match Richard's personal charisma. Though fervently religious, he was a cold and calculating man, a careful planner and a shrewd manipulator. Already in frail health, Philip quickly succumbed to the diseases that plagued many new arrivals to Palestine. He was bedridden for most of his sojourn in the

The Principality of Antioch was the second largest Crusader State in the Holy Land, after the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Founded by the Romans and maintained by the Byzantines, Antioch fell to the Turks around 1084. When the Crusaders conquered the city in 1098, its population numbered around 40,000.

#### Legend

1. Tower of La Mahomerie
2. Tower of Tancred
3. Tower of Malregard
4. Gate of Saint Paul
5. Gate of the Dog
6. Gate of the Duke
7. Gate of Saint George
8. Iron Gate
9. Palace
10. Cathedral of Saint Peter
11. Citadel
12. Tower of the Two Sisters
13. Fortified bridge
14. Bridge of the Boats
15. Cemetery







Holy Land and allowed Richard to direct most of the Crusade.

Despite his best efforts to lure the Crusaders away from Acre into a pitched battle, Saladin failed to break the siege, though he harried their fortified encampments and cut off their overland supply routes from Tyre. Because the Crusaders maintained a tight naval blockade around Acre and were well-supplied from the sea, they could hold their position despite Saladin's harrying.

With the siege at a virtual stalemate, the Christian and Muslim camps, separated by a short distance outside the besieged city, became increasingly familiar with each other. Knights and soldiers on both sides established friendships, threw parties, and sometimes engaged in contests or tournaments. Ever since his arrival, Richard was eager to meet with the honored Saladin, who had become something of a celebrity even back in Europe. Though the romances may state otherwise, the Sultan politely refused and would never meet Richard face to face, though he sometimes entertained other Christian guests.

In July 1191, the Crusaders finally forced Acre to surrender. Saladin wept when the city fell, and the honorable sultan soon had another occasion to weep. Having captured over 2,500 Muslim prisoners in Acre, Richard did not have the provisions to feed them all, nor the guards to keep them under surveillance. When faced with a similar situation at Jerusalem, the generous Saladin had simply let his prisoners go free, but Richard marched the prisoners outside the city and had them slaughtered to the last woman and child.

Having captured Acre, Philip and Richard began to argue. Racked by disease, Philip desperately wanted to return home. Before he left, however, Philip wanted to make sure that his cousin, Conrad of Montferrat, was appointed the theoretical King of Jerusalem after his heroic salvation of Tyre. Of course, Richard supported the other contender to the throne, Guy of Lusignan. After a month of bickering,

Richard lent his reluctant support to Conrad. As soon as an agreement was settled, King Philip returned to France in August after only four months in the Holy Land.

Dismayed by Philip's lack of resolve, Richard remained determined to conquer Jerusalem. After Philip's departure, he struck south along the coast, heading for Jaffa. Saladin followed Richard's advance along a parallel course, probing his flanks and lagging rear with lightning-swift cavalry attacks. The main body of the sultan's army intercepted the Crusaders at Arsuf, near Caesarea, in the first pitched battle of the Third Crusade. However, Saladin's infantry panicked at the awesome charge of Christian cavalry and fled the field in complete disarray. But though Richard's forces clearly triumphed at Arsuf, the victory was by no means decisive. Saladin regrouped his scattered forces, which had fled from battle with surprisingly light casualties, while Richard captured Jaffa (an easily reinforced supply base along the coast). This would be the last concrete success of the Third Crusade.

For the next six months, Richard attempted to march on Jerusalem, but was repeatedly thwarted by Saladin's maneuvers. Though Saladin and Richard were at a stalemate, Saladin had the luxury of time, whereas Richard did not. Richard began fierce negotiations with Saladin, but he was in no position to bargain, and the sultan knew it. Back in France, Philip was already plotting with Richard's brother, Prince John, to dismantle the Lionheart's domains. In Palestine, the Crusaders could only receive reinforcements from across the wide sea, whereas Saladin could call upon the resources of Mosul, Aleppo, Damascus, and Cairo, each wealthy capital within easy march of Jerusalem. Even if Richard managed to capture the Holy City, Saladin argued, the Franks could never hope to hold it for long after Richard and his Crusaders returned home to England. As the months passed, news of political developments in England worsened. Richard became





desperate to leave and reluctantly signed a five-year truce with Saladin in September 1192. Gracious as ever, the sultan allowed the Crusaders to complete their pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulcher (unarmed, of course), but the demoralized Richard refused to go.

Before Richard departed the Holy Land in October, he was obliged to settle the succession of the "Throne of Jerusalem." Though Conrad of Montferrat was the preferred candidate, he was murdered under mysterious circumstances (perhaps by Assassins), forcing Richard to choose a wily old knight in his service, Henry of Champagne, for the post. As for King Guy of Jerusalem, Richard sold him the island of Cyprus to keep him from muddying the political waters in Palestine.

The legendary figures of the Third Crusade did not thrive long after it ended. An old man in his sixties, Saladin quickly deteriorated and died peacefully at his home in Damascus, six months after Richard's departure from Palestine in March 1193. Richard, too, did not enjoy much success after the Crusade. While traveling across Europe in disguise, he was recognized, captured, and held for ransom by the Duke of Austria, whom Richard had insulted outside the siege of Acre. Back in England, the reigning Prince John had little incentive to ransom his brother too quickly, so Richard remained in prison for over a year. (From this time come the English tales of Robin Hood and his Merry Men, fighting Prince John's rule while waiting for King Richard's return.)

The death of Saladin and the imprisonment of Richard close the last heroic and glamorous chapter of the Crusading period. After the Third Crusade, the Franks retained control of a narrow strip of coastline, stretching from Antioch in the north to Jaffa in the south. Though far from a spectacular success, the Third Crusade established the Kingdom of Acre and secured an albeit minor Frankish presence in the Holy Land for another century.

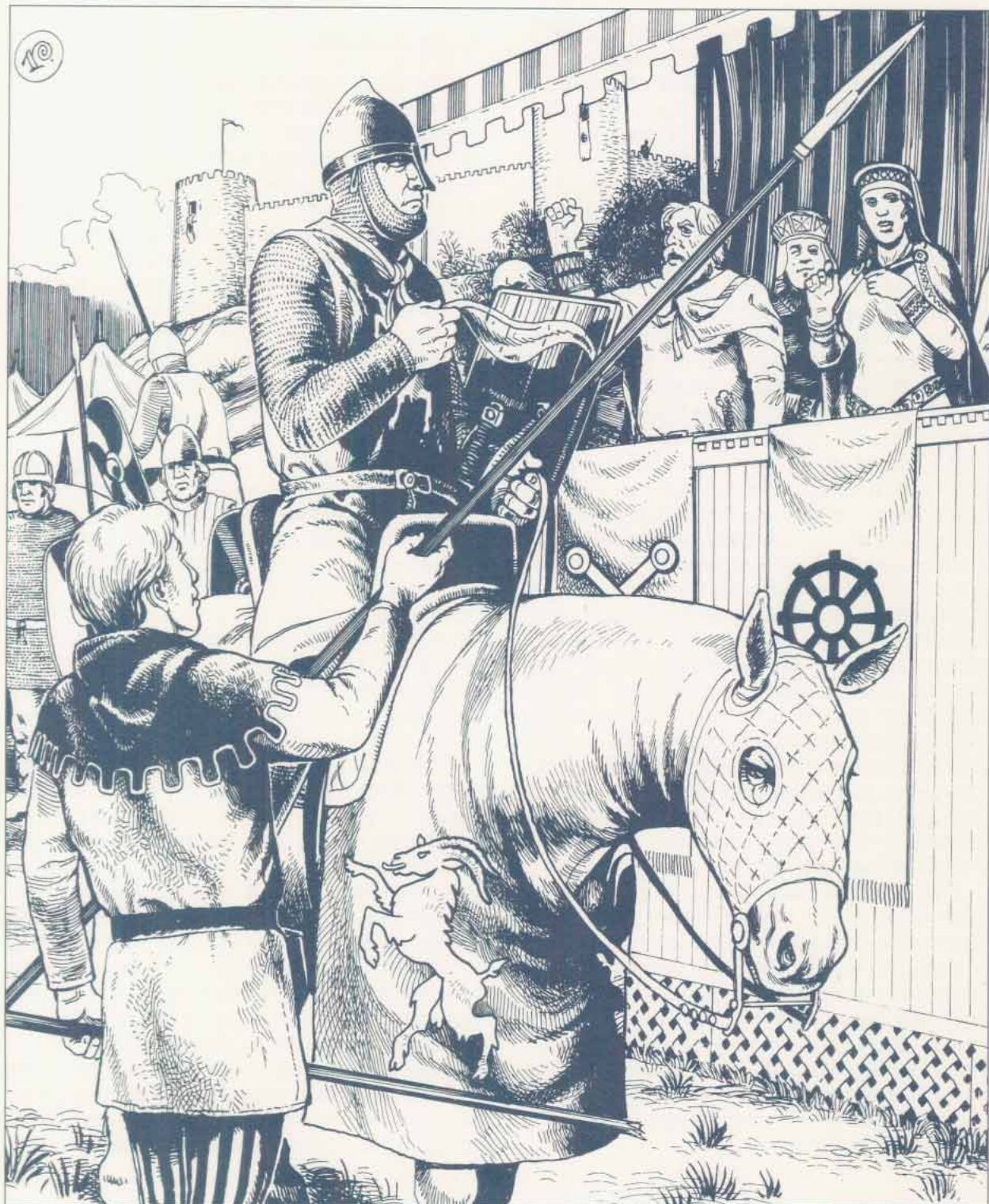
## Later Crusades

The Third Crusade was the last successful expedition to the Holy Land. The many subsequent Crusades were elaborate fiascos noted almost entirely for their religious intolerance, visceral greed, and senseless destruction. The leaders of the Fourth Crusade, for instance, collaborated with the Venetians to sack and destroy Constantinople in 1204, to the horror of Pope Innocent and the Eastern Orthodox Church. The Fifth Crusade of 1218 ended in disaster when the crusaders bungled an invasion of Egypt. The popes of the 13th and 14th centuries, who summoned the later Crusades, could no longer control their own creations.

From the secular viewpoint of many later European rulers, crusading in Palestine was simply not profitable. These kings and popes manipulated the established crusading apparatus to stamp out heretics and pagans closer to home. The Albigensian Crusade of 1208, for example, was not directed against the Muslims of Syria, but against a pacifistic offshoot of Christianity in southern France. Few of these later Crusades had much lasting impact on daily life in the tiny, distant Kingdom of Acre.

When Western knights wanted to fight against the Saracens, they often traveled to Spain, where the Aragonian kings had struggled against their Moorish overlords since the 9th century. The Church did not distinguish between Western and Eastern frontiers during its war against Islam. In his writings and sermons, Pope Urban II considered fighting at either the Spanish or Palestinian fronts equally meritorious. The reconquest of Spain, an unrelenting campaign which lasted until the late 15th century, undeniably diverted Western support from Outremer. The forces of Christendom may have won their war against Islam in the *Reconquista*, but at the price of the Christian States in Palestine.







## Adventuring Ideas

*"It is easy to understand to what anger we were aroused to punish such villainy. Supported by divine aid, we engaged this enemy in battle and gained a quick victory."*

—King Richard Lionheart, 1191

This chapter (for the Dungeon Master only!) gives advice on running a Crusades campaign, then outlines an introductory campaign, suitable for starting adventurers. The chapter concludes with adventure hooks that can be dropped into the campaign as rumors or expand into full-length scenarios. Specific game statistics in each section are left for the DM to devise, based on the strengths of the particular player characters.

### Campaigning

This sourcebook has not glossed over the injustices and petty hatreds that often dominated the Crusades, but a campaign should approach the era differently. Like a historical novel, a historical campaign emphasizes selected aspects of its era to create a dramatic atmosphere—in this case, one of idealistic heroism and high adventure. Where the Crusaders showed intolerance or greed, player characters instead behave virtuously and with compassion, following the knightly ideal that emerged from the Crusading era.

Studying history is always valuable and often fascinating. Sometimes, though, the aims of history and of entertainment are fundamentally different. A historical novel may take careful liberties with details if these inaccuracies help its story, and it can downplay contemporary bigotries and other matters that would offend modern readers. Likewise, the Crusades campaign should respect the setting. But when obsolete medieval attitudes (bigotry, xenophobia, casual cruelty) would keep players from fully enjoying the game, replace those attitudes with more modern beliefs.

When the DM does this, it may be useful to

give players the actual history first (briefly!), then tell them how the game adjusts history. "Your forces have captured Antioch. The historical Crusaders would have slaughtered everyone in the city, but your king has ransomed the citizens to Saladin for a fair sum. Now that you're inside the walls—" And so on with the adventure. These historical footnotes work best between episodes of the adventure, rather than in the midst when they might interrupt the flow of the action.

Deleting atrocities is obviously a good idea, but the campaign's combination of history and the historic ideal creates interesting lesser conflicts. Genuinely heroic PC Crusaders, drawn to the Holy Land to fight evil "pagans," soon learn that the Saracens are neither pagan nor devilish. With their entire moral justification for a holy war gone, what then? The heroes' companions and superiors may nurture the unreasoning hatred typical of the time. The heroes must decide by their actions whether to obey the orders of commanders or the dictates of conscience.

Clumsy or ill-advised actions may turn the heroes' peers against them, so that the PCs become renegades in an alien land. However, skillful play can lead to exciting opportunities. The player characters might sidestep the fundamental conflicts of Outremer and instead do good works that help both sides: capturing bandits or pirates, fighting the fanatical Assassins, or delicately reigning in the passions of fellow Crusaders and thereby preventing calamities.

Many adventures derive not from conflict with the Saracens but simply from the meeting of two diverse cultures. The following minicampaign gives a good example.

### A Count's Ransom

This minicampaign takes place in historical or legendary Outremer and works best with a well-balanced party of Christian adventurers. Though the plot revolves around the capture





of Count Baldwin in 1104, the DM can easily arrange the capture of another prominent prince during a border raid at any time during the 12th century.

**Introduction:** News of the midsummer jousting tournament at Antioch has drawn knights, adventurers, and entertainers from all across northern Outremer to witness a spectacle of military achievements, feasting, and general merriment. The Franks love a good party, and no one knows how to throw a better celebration than Prince Bohemund.

The joust should appeal to all kinds of characters. Obviously fighters enjoy the tests of martial expertise, but rogues also find mingling with the gold-laden throngs highly profitable. The clergy, of course, is at hand to bless the combatants, care for the wounded, and arbitrate disputes. The fighting, feasting, and general merriment will last almost a week. Despite the carnival atmosphere, however, not everyone is entirely in a festive mood.

A few months ago, the Franks suffered a serious defeat along the eastern frontier near Harran. The Saracens captured Count Baldwin and almost wiped out the forces of Edessa. Prince Bohemund's forces, however, emerged from the battle virtually intact, and even though the Prince later managed to defeat the Saracens and save Edessa from the pagans, the count remains in an unknown prison. Worse yet, the Prince seems unwilling to help ransom the count, for the arrogant Saracen lord has demanded an exorbitant price for Baldwin's release—50,000 dinars, 50 suits of Frankish mail, a dozen Cairene stallions, and a trio of albino goshawks. Unfortunately, both the Prince and the count's wife are completely broke. The flashy tournament conceals their true financial condition.

**Setup:** While entertaining the PCs at the joust, drop hints and rumors about the Prince's previous campaign and the capture of the count. The Countess Morphia, wearing black silk robes and veils, lingers like a dark

cloud around the festivities. Eventually she notices one of the PCs (a male warrior—preferably a Frankish knight or monastic warrior) and arranges for a messenger to bring the PC and his friends to an audience in her tent.

Lady Morphia was an Armenian princess before her marriage to Count Baldwin. Her face is dark and exotic, quite different from the frail, pallid features of a Frankish lady. When the PCs arrive, she greets them in delightfully accented French (she also speaks Arabic and her native Armenian). From the outset, she attempts to discern the PCs' political loyalties. Are they sworn to the service of Antioch? Jerusalem? another minor Christian lord?

The countess eventually discusses her husband's capture. The situation in Edessa is dire. Most of the count's powerful vassals were either captured or slain during the battle. The remaining knights in her service cannot be spared from the defense of the county. Morphia makes it clear from the outset that neither she nor the Prince of Antioch has the financial resources to secure the count's release. The situation is not hopeless, however. The countess has influential allies who might help. But she needs resourceful and trustworthy assistants to act as messengers and help assemble her husband's complicated ransom.

Morphia cannot promise the PCs immediate pay for their service. Provided they swear fealty to her, however, Morphia promises to award them important fiefs in the County of Edessa once her husband is released. She stresses that by assisting her cause, the party will complete an invaluable service for all the Christian States of Outremer.

The countess is a sha'ir, sorceress, or hakima of considerable power (at least 7th level). She is quite knowledgeable about the history, science, and languages of the region. As the party slowly gathers the parts of her husband's ransom, she might serve as a men-









After the PCs explain the count's dilemma, the merchant promises to obtain the stallions and put them on the ship. In the meantime, the party can explore the fantastic city and the nearby pyramids.

*A trio of albino goshawks:* To obtain these rare birds, the party must learn about falconry, a favorite sport and diversion of Arab nobles. Many Frankish lords, including the Prince of Antioch and the King of Jerusalem, enjoy this sport as well. These expensive birds of prey are trained and cared for by expert hirelings known as falconers. One of Morphia's cousins, named Nikael, is a falconer's apprentice in the mountains north of Antioch. The countess directs the party to Nikael to learn more about albino goshawks.

The falconer's apprentice has heard of these rare birds, but they only live in the deserted Anatolian highlands. Out of respect for his cousin (and in hope for a position at her court once he finishes his apprenticeship), Nikael leads the party north across the dangerous Turkish frontier to find these rare birds. Once the characters leave the Turk-dominated valleys of Anatolia, they must travel through an inhospitable mountain wilderness, threatened by lions, wolves, and possibly dangerous spirits such as *jinn*.

**Plot twists:** The adventures in this campaign are fairly straightforward, but the DM can complicate matters with a few plot twists. Here are a few suggestions:

- Prince Bohemund of Antioch is desperate for cash. The latest defeat at Harran and the recent joust have emptied his treasury. When he learns the PCs are escorting the 50,000 dinar ransom from Jerusalem, he orders his capable and ruthless nephew, Tancred, to stage an ambush. Disguised as Saracen raiders, Tancred and his large patrol lie in wait.
- Mu'izzi of Cairo is a secret operative of the Assassins. He happily helps ransom the count, because the Assassins hope to establish a new stronghold in the area. After the count is released, the Assassins will approach him with an offer he cannot refuse. In the short term, Mu'izzi might enlist the unwitting party in the Assassins' service, as spies, messengers, or couriers. They may never discover the nature of their employment, unless (and until) something goes wrong on the mission.
- Despite outward appearances, the king has no intention of raising the money for the count's ransom. The king needs the gold for his own campaigns against the Saracens. Although he never directly refuses to donate the money, he never produces it, either. Each time Morphia sends the PCs to inquire, the king is either indisposed, or, if the PCs track him down, he is still gathering the funds. A little snooping around court at Jerusalem reveals that the king has made no effort to assemble the ransom. The PCs must turn elsewhere for the funds—perhaps a helpful Mu'izzi?
- Morphia's youngest daughter, Yvette, falls in love with one of the PCs. A proud and independent girl of 13, she is obsessed with romantic ideas of chivalry and courtly love. She wants to marry a dashing knight, but really, any swarthy adventurer will do. Introduce Yvette at the beginning of the campaign, accompanying her mother to the joust. Each time the party returns to Edessa, Yvette shows up to fawn over her chosen champion. Before long, she asks her parents to arrange a marriage!
- Nikael, the falconer's apprentice, is hiding in the mountains for more reasons than simply training hawks. For the past few months, the ranger has been poaching deer in Prince Bohemund's forests near Antioch. The prince has offered a reward for Nikael's capture or accidental demise.
- Just before the PCs deliver the ransom, one of the count's vassals, Joscelin, escapes from prison with the help of Armenian spies. Though wounded, Joscelin wants to lead a war party into Saracen territory to





rescue Count Baldwin. Unfortunately, none of Edessa's knights can be spared—unless the PCs decide to join this foolhardy venture. Morphia advises against this, especially because she does not believe the story of Joscelin's miraculous escape. Who released Joscelin and for what purpose?

**Concluding the campaign:** Once the party has amassed the ransom in Edessa, Morphia gathers her remaining knights to escort the trove to the appointed meeting place. After inspecting the treasure (perhaps frowning at the damaged condition of some suits of mail), the Saracen lord releases Count Baldwin. Following the tender reunion with his wife, the count rewards each PC with an important fief in his domain (vacated by knights who died at the Battle of Harran). Provided they serve him well, when the count becomes King of Jerusalem in eight years, he no doubt promotes his most loyal vassals to important roles in the service of Outremer. Of course, the future Queen Morphia continues her generous patronage of the PCs.

### Adventure Hooks

**Saladin's Scimitar.** Everyone knows that tempered steel from Damascus, mottled with a characteristic smoky pattern, makes the best swords in the world. Saladin's legendary *scimitar of sharpness*, for instance, was forged in Damascus. That blade has now disappeared. Some whisper that it was stolen by the Assassins, others think that a political rival from Baghdad sponsored the theft. There is always the possibility that the charitable sultan simply gave it away to an admiring visitor. Regardless of the reason, the sword has supposedly changed owners, and Saladin does not seem to care.

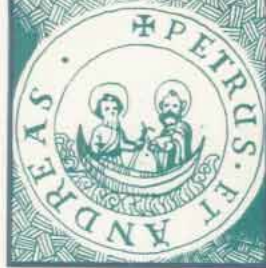
Members of the Frankish nobility, including the king, place a great value on magical and legendary weapons. These patrons all want to locate and obtain this weapon, regardless of cost.



This adventure is driven by rumors, spread across Outremer by Saladin's clever network of spies and propaganda artists, and the scenario provides an opportunity to lead the party on a wild goose chase across the Holy Land. As they travel from city to city, the PCs hear new and increasingly outlandish rumors about the scimitar. Make up as many amusing stories as desired. The Saracens have devised the entire propaganda campaign to make the sultan (and his magical weapon) seem larger than life, thereby demoralizing the Christians of Outremer. The party should also hear the good legends of Saladin's generosity, honor, and compassion (see Chapter 7 for more background information on the sultan).

Eventually, if the heroes persevere, rumors lead them to Damascus, the western capitol of Saladin's empire. The scimitar remains, as it always has, in Saladin's palace. Because the party no doubt has learned by now about Sal-





adin's custom of meeting foreigners, they might be tempted to arrange an audience with the sultan.

Saladin is a busy man, shielded in his palace behind an impressive bureaucracy of mamluks and advisors while he plans his next military campaign against the Franks. The party must first convince Saladin's ministers (some of whom speak French) to admit them for an audience. Should the viziers learn that their own propaganda has brought the PCs to this spot, they immediately arrange for an interview with Saladin. After all, the Sultan will be interested to learn about the effectiveness of his own spy and propaganda network.

After stripping them of all weapons, guards escort the heroes through the palace, past countless riches and treasures carefully arranged to impress visitors. However, Saladin's *diwan* (public audience room) is more spartan. Dressed in a simple white robe, the sultan waits for the PCs. He is a short, thin man, but he has a warm, welcoming smile. He only speaks Arabic; an interpreter is available, if necessary.

Saladin is interested in (and amused by) the tales of the party's travels in search of his scimitar. By the end of the interview, he appears quite pleased. "Your sources of information are no doubt mistaken," Saladin says, pointing to a sheathed scimitar lying beside him, "as Khlamsin has never left my side since I began the *jihad*." The scimitar, he insists, is not for sale at any price.

So that his guests do not leave Damascus empty-handed, Saladin gives them each a blade of Damascene steel (treat these as enchanted +1 weapons). The party may remain in the palace as Saladin's guests for up to three days. The Sultan invites them to return to Damascus in a few months, when he can pump them for more information about political and military developments in Outremer. Gradually, the party might even become Saladin's spies!

**The Leper Knights.** The Knights of St. Lazarus are a small monastic brotherhood modeled after the Hospitallers, charged with tending a few leper colonies in the mountains south of Antioch. The Lazarites are sometimes known as the Unclean, or Leper Knights, for it is rumored that only warriors stricken with the plague may join their brotherhood. Initially, they defend the colony from the bandits and monsters that inhabit the wilderness. As their affliction gradually worsens, the Lazarites are cared for by their fellow knights.

In a land of infestation and disease, victims of leprosy are frighteningly common, even among the Frankish aristocracy. Sadly, a young Frankish noble named Bernold has fallen victim to this disease in Jerusalem. All attempts to cure the boy have failed, and the family has decided to send Bernold to the Lazarites far to the north. The family first asked for volunteers to escort the boy to the leper colony, but so far none have accepted. Bernold's parents are now offering a handsome reward (1,000 dinars) to any group who completes this charitable deed.

Bernold, a pimply young lad of 16, has not yet realized the nature of his illness. Still in its early stages, the leprosy has merely numbed the tips of his fingers and toes. Besides these symptoms (which will gradually worsen with time until all his extremities have gone numb), there are no outward signs that the boy is a leper. Bernold's parents have hidden the truth about the disease—partly to shield the child's feelings, partly because of their own weakness, and partly to avert a scandal among the elite social circles in Jerusalem.

As a result, the boy has become a spoiled brat. Ever since he became sick, his parents have fawned over him and given the boy anything he wanted. Now that they are sending him away, he has become quite enraged. Bernold has no desire to go to the monastery—he has everything he wants at home in Jerusalem! The youth is not stupid, however.





He plays along with his parents and the PCs until he sees the opportunity to escape. With a small pouch of gold, he hopes to reach Acre, and from there, sail to Sicily. He dreams of becoming a corsair and living a life of adventure as a pirate.

One night, after the party has left Jerusalem with Bernold, he sneaks off into the darkness, but quickly runs into a small band of Saracen adventurers on a light raid. The troupe consists of a dozen Turkish cavalry and a trained mamluk named Salim, all led by a cunning sorcerer named Al-Afdal. The wizard immediately realizes Bernold's social standing and *charms* the boy into obedience. The Saracens prepare to ride back to Damascus, where they will hold Bernold for ransom (or sell him at the slave markets if their demands are not met).

If the heroes do not recover Bernold and get him safely to the Lazarite monastery, their reputation in Jerusalem is seriously damaged. Bernold's parents are prominent members of the aristocracy and seek to avenge the family honor at the earliest opportunity!

(A technical note: Leprosy, now known as Hansen's disease, is the least contagious of all infectious diseases. Contrary to belief both during the Crusades and today, leprosy is not fatal and does not in itself disfigure its victims. Rather, it deadens sensations of pain, so that victims often leave injuries untreated; the wounds become infected and then gangrenous, leading to the awful disfigurement seen in advanced cases. Of course, no one in the Middle Ages knew this distinction, and every society regarded lepers with terror and loathing.)

**Ruins of the Ancients.** The Holy Land nestles among the wreckage of ancient civilizations. In Egypt the crumbling pyramids and antique monuments still wait for explorers. Priceless treasures remain hidden beneath the forbidding desert sands, guarded by mummified guardians and unmoving statues. Near

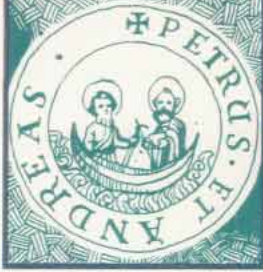
Baghdad, the ruined cities of Babylon and Nineveh have been abandoned to the wind and the mercurial *jinn*. Amid the maze of broken walls and tumbled pillars, dark pits and hidden stairwells descend to the temples of Baal and other gods best left forgotten. Countless other crumbling ruins litter the wilderness landscape near Outremer.

Along the road from Acre to Damascus, near the Christian-Muslim frontier, lies a ruined stronghold built a century ago by the Byzantines. The Damascenes once razed the castle, so that now only featureless piles of rubble remain. It is rumored, however, that the Saracens never discovered the castle's treasury. Somewhere, hidden in the ruins and guarded by angry ghosts, lies over 100,000 dirhams in silver coins. A few small expeditions have left Jerusalem to search the castle ruins, but none have returned. Are angry spirits to blame, or merely the large gang of bandits who secretly search for the treasure?

**Star-Crossed Lovers.** In the Christian city of Tyre, Humphrey of Auvergne and Tamr bin Astok met by chance at a well. The noble young bard was watering his horse; she was drawing water for her family. Their eyes met, and they fell in love. Their respective families, of Frankish Christian and Shi'ite Muslim backgrounds, abhor each other. Soon after Humphrey asked for Tamr's hand in marriage, the girl's family carried her away to a secret location in the city, and now they plan to transport her to Damascus.

The heroes meet Humphrey on the street as he is being bodily ejected from the Astok's house. The handsome young gallant begs them for help in locating his true love. He offers the PCs money, he promises to compose odes in their honor, he appeals to their Christian charity, and if all else fails he threatens to risk his life by trying to rescue Tamr alone. Humphrey is so endearingly passionate that the heroes should feel a foretaste of the romantic chivalric ideal that emerged later in the Middle Ages, wherein pure love





between knight and lady drew bystanders to help them overcome obstacles to a just union.

If they help Humphrey, the characters can locate Tamr's hideaway and arrange a lovers' rendezvous through trickery or stealth. Humphrey and Tamr have only brief, chaste moments together before their families discover the scheme, but this short time serves to demonstrate their love to even cynical PCs. Perhaps a priest PC can marry the two on the spot!

But marriage or not, the families separate the lovers. Both families using increasing force to dissuade those who seek to unite Humphrey and Tamr. Her father is a leading local merchant, a shareholder in many rich caravans that bring frankincense from Arabia and dried fruit and gemstones from Ethiopia. He sends Tamr's burly brothers to teach Humphrey (and the PCs?) not to "violate the purity" of a good Muslim woman. Meanwhile, he ships Tamr off as an unwilling passenger on the next caravan to Damascus, where the Astoks have family.

On the Frankish side, Humphrey's uncle, Theophilus, is a leading Templar knight. The thought of his nephew marrying a Saracen disgusts him. With permission from Humphrey's father, the Templar and some lesser knights try to abduct the lad and hold him in a nearby castle until this fiasco blows over.

In a rigorous historical account this unfortunate love would lead to tragedy. But in a role-playing game the heroes can help the young lovers escape society's strictures. Humphrey's loyal servant can give the PCs the bard's desperate plea for help (perhaps expressed in verse), and they can rescue him from Theophilus's castle. Then, with angry knights minutes behind, the PCs and Humphrey reach Tamr's home and discover from her loving sister that Tamr has already left with the caravan. There follows an exciting chase through the desert, a stealthy or quick raid on the caravan, and extrication of the overjoyed Tamr.

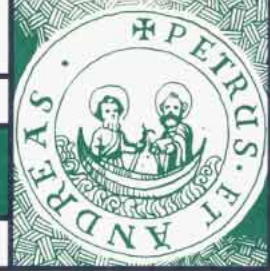
Then what? The lovers have no future

together in Outremer or surrounding Islamic lands. The heroes can send them with another caravan north to tolerant Constantinople, or by ship southwest to free-thinking Alexandria, Egypt. The nobleman and his bride might instead take up a humble anonymous existence in an obscure village outside Tyre, or the sympathetic caravan leader could hire them as guard and cook on this and subsequent caravans.

Ultimately, the characters may incur the wrath of two dangerous noble houses. The heroes may have to make a further Faustian bargain with the Assassins to prevent the Auvergnés and Astoks from pursuing revenge against them. However, the Auvergne patriarch and the Astok father might instead pursue vendettas against one another, ignoring the PCs. In an unlikely happy ending the two families (with the PCs' help) realize they can use one another's help and form a restrained alliance: the Astoks providing luxuries to Tyre's nobility, and the Auvergnés serving as the Astoks' caravan guards in bandit-ridden lands.

**An Angel's Riddle.** In the heart of the Syrian desert, a small shrine stands near a verdant oasis, dedicated to Saint Peter, the first Apostle. Over the years, many devout pilgrims and knights have sought this secluded shrine. Countless searchers perished during the long, treacherous journey, but a few survived the ordeal. These fortunates claim they were guided to the calm shrine by a beautiful maiden named Catherine, a radiant angel of incomparable grace and poise. At the shrine, the pilgrims saw the Sacred Slippers of Galilee, worn by Saint Peter when he walked on water at Christ's bidding. The angelic guardian promised to give the Sacred Slippers to any pious Christian who could answer her riddle and perform a secret quest. However, those who have tried to solve the angel's riddle and undertaken her mysterious task have never been seen again!





## Glossary

*alim* (Arabic): a learned man, usually in the Islamic sciences, law, or religion.

*amir* (Arabic): "one who commands," usually an important military leader, commander, or general; in Turkish, *emir*.

Anatolia: Asia Minor, the Asian region of what is now Turkey.

Assassin (from Arabic *hashishim*, meaning "users of hashish"): a fanatical militant sect of Shi'ite terrorists during the Crusades. See "Shiah."

*atabeg* (Turkish): "prince-father," originally an adoptive regent who ruled in the name of a young prince; later it applied to dynasties of governors.

*bezant* (Greek): a Byzantine gold piece, a standard Western currency at the time of the Crusades.

*Caliph* (Arabic): the "deputy" and "successor" of the Prophet Muhammad; originally the spiritual and political leader of the Islamic world recognized by the Sunni branch of Islam. During the Crusades, the Caliph was an impotent figurehead, dominated by a Turkish sultan.

*chanson de geste* (French, "song of heroic deeds"): a genre of French romantic poems popular in the Middle Ages, celebrating heroic or historical figures. The best known example is the *Song of Roland*.

Crusades (English, from French *croix*, "cross"): the wars fought by Western Christendom to recapture the Holy Land from the Muslims.

*dinar* (from Greek *denarion*): an Arabic gold piece.

*dirham* (from Greek *drakme*): an Arabic silver piece.

*diwan* (Arabic): the chamber or tent where a ruler holds court or receives counsel.

*emir*: see *amir*.

*fida'i* (Arabic, plural *fedayeen*): "one who sacrifices himself" for a cause, a freedom fighter.

*Franj*, *Faranj*, *Ifranj*, *Ifranjat*, etc. (Arabic): various words used to describe the Franks, and later any fair-skinned Westerners.

*hammam* (Arabic): the public bath, an important institution in Arabian society.

*hajj* (Arabic): the obligatory Islamic "pilgrimage" to the holy city of Mecca, one of the Pillars of Islam. After the *hajj*, a Muslim receives the title *hajji*.

*hijra* (Arabic): the "flight" or "emigration" of the Prophet Muhammad to Medina in 622 A.D., the start of the Muslim calendar. Also *Hegira*.

Hospitaller: a monastic knight belonging to the military Order of Saint John, which was first founded as a hospital in Jerusalem and later mobilized in the defense of the Holy Land.

*imam* (Arabic): a "leader" of the Muslim community, or any Muslim who leads the prayers in a mosque.

indulgence: an absolution of sins given by the Pope, which assured that the recipient would not have to suffer temporal punishment in Purgatory, but would go straight to Heaven after death. The Pope granted indulgences to all those who went on the Crusades.

invest: to surround and besiege a fortified site, blocking all communications and supply lines.

Islam (Arabic): "Submission" to the will of God. The religion founded by Muhammad; see Chapter 2.

*jihād* (Arabic): originally, the Islamic "struggle" for achievement in the name of God. By extension, the word later came to mean a holy war against enemies of Islam.

*jinni* (Arabic): a genie or malignant spirit. Plural *jinn*.

*khamisin* (Arabic): a hot wind from the desert.

*Ka'aba* (Arabic): the most sacred shrine of Islam, located at the heart of the Great Mosque in Mecca.

*mamluk* (Arabic): a warrior slave who serves the state to earn his freedom. This institutional slavery prevailed in the Islamic world during the Crusades, giving rise to the Mamluk dynasty in Egypt during the 13th century.

mosque: an Islamic place of worship.

muezzin (from Arabic *mu'adhdhin*): a man who calls Muslims to prayer five times daily, usually from the minaret of a mosque.





## Appendix: Annotated Bibliography

*mullah* (Arabic): a preacher of Islam.

Muhammad: A.D. 570?-632. Founder of Islam.

Regarded by Muslims as the last and greatest of the line of Prophets including Moses, Abraham, and Jesus.

Muhammadan: Western synonym (until the 19th century) for a Muslim, a term repudiated by Muslims because they do not worship the Prophet Muhammad. See also "Saracen."

Outremer (French): the land "beyond the sea," i.e., the Christian States of Jerusalem, Antioch, Tripoli, and Edessa.

*qadi* (Arabic): a judge who enforces the Sharia.

*Quran* (also *Koran*, Arabic): the holy book of Islam, which Muslims believe was dictated by God to the Prophet Muhammad.

*ra'is* (Arabic): any temporary public official or elected leader in a town or village.

reduce: to capture a fortified site and neutralize the enemy forces within.

Ramadan (Arabic): an Islamic holy season lasting one lunar month, during which Muslims ritually fast from sunrise to sunset. Because it follows a lunar calendar, the beginning of Ramadan shifts annually.

*Rum* (Arabic, "Rome"): the Byzantine Empire, once the eastern part of the Roman Empire. It later applied to regions of Anatolia conquered by the Turks from the Byzantines.

Saracen (from Greek *Sarakanoi* and Latin *Saracenus*, "people who dwell in tents"): first used to describe the Bedouin nomads who inhabited the Arabian Peninsula. By the time of the Crusades, this Western term was extended to include all Muslims, whether Turks, Kurds, Arabs, or Egyptians.

Seljuqs (Turkish): several Turkish dynasties that ruled central and western Asia from the 11th to 13th centuries.

*Sharia* (Arabic): the Holy Law of Islam, which codifies the conduct of Muslims in everyday life.

*sharif* (Arabic): a noble, descended from the family of the Prophet Muhammad.

*Shiah* (Arabic): a minority branch of Islam at the time of the Crusades, which revered the Caliph of Egypt as the successor of the

Prophet Muhammad. A *Shi'ite* spurned the authority of the Caliph in Baghdad.

*Sufi* (Arabic): a mystic, religious order of Islam, founded in the 8th century.

*suq* (Arabic): the indoor bazaar or marketplace of a city or town.

*Sunna* (Arabic): "the way" of the Prophet Muhammad, including all his speech and actions. A *Sunni* adheres to these tenets. The term also refers to the majority branch of Islam at the time of the Crusades. Sunnis revered the Caliph in Baghdad as the successor of Muhammad, as opposed to the minority Shi'ites, who supported the Fatimid Caliph of Egypt.

Templar: a monastic knight belonging to the military Order of the Temple, founded to protect pilgrims on the road to Jerusalem.

vizier (from Arabic *wazir*, "minister"): originally the chief advisors of the Fatimid Caliph in Egypt, the viziers eventually administered the government under the theoretical authority of the figurehead Caliph. Once Saladin conquered Egypt and abolished the Caliphate, the vizier became the ultimate power in the country.

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### Other Sources

Music can be an important inspiration in both writing and gaming. The record label London offers "The Music of the Crusades," played with period instruments and sung in their original (medieval) French, German, or Latin. The libretto provides a modern translation, so the DM can get a good idea of the thoughts and feelings of the time. It makes excellent background music while gaming, as well.

Most monastic Gregorian Chants of the medieval period also survive to this day. For modern adaptations of medieval music (excellent for gaming), check out *Dead Can Dance* and *Enigma*.

The author recommends the romances of Sir Walter Scott, including *The Talisman* and *Ivanhoe*. These historical novels are set during the Crusades. For more contemporary fantasy set during the waning years of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, see *Alamut* and *The Sword and the Cross* by Judith Tarr. Although not directly related to the Crusades, the "Deryni" series by Katherine Kurtz (*Deryni Rising*, *High Deryni*, *Deryni Checkmate*, and others, published by Del Rey Books) creatively mingles medieval society, a powerful church, and a compelling vision of magic.



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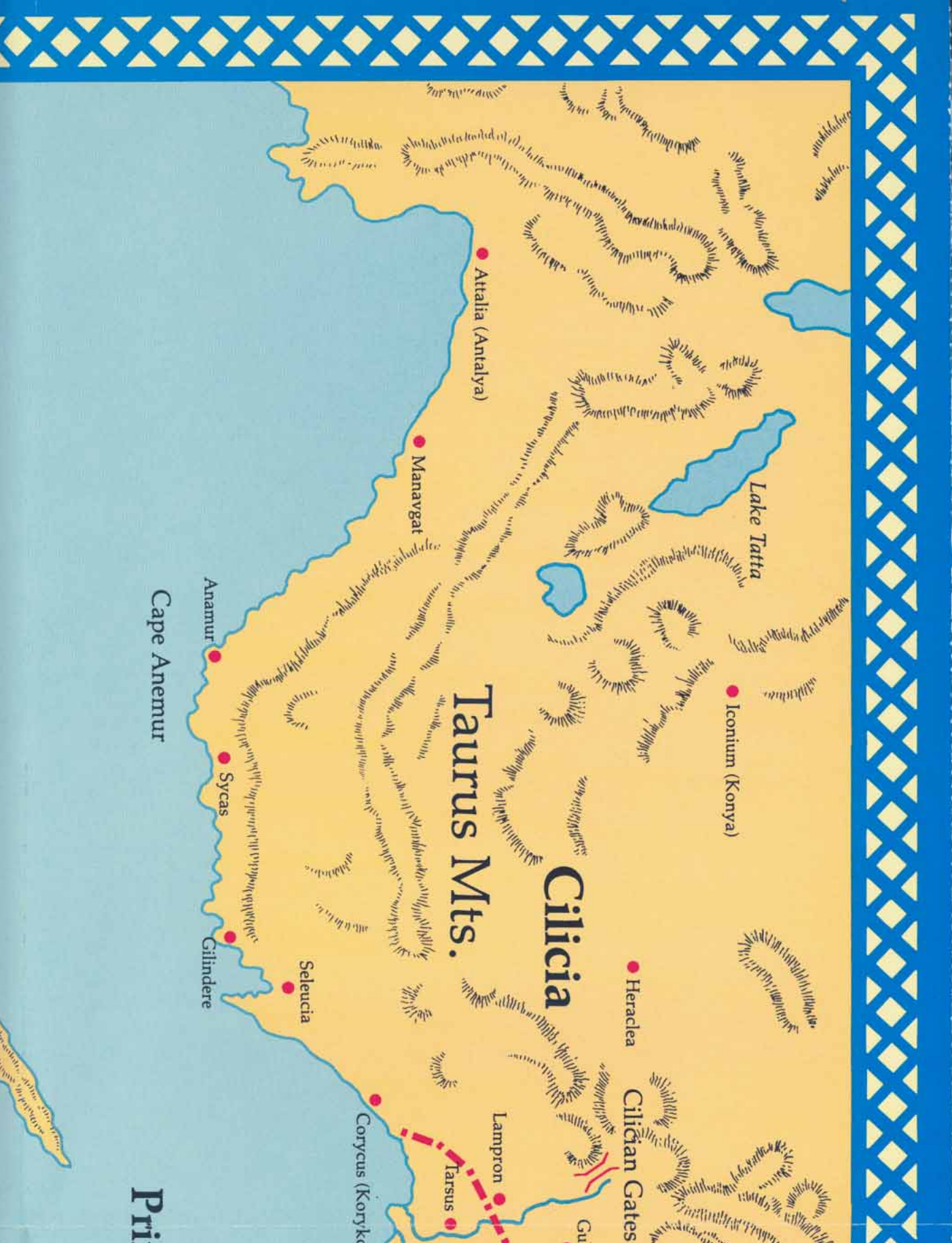
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Lampron

Heraclea

Iconium (Konya)

Cilician Gates

Pri







Anamur  
Cape Anemur  
Gylindere



Cyprus

St. Simeon (St. Symeon)  
Principality of Ant

TRIPOLI  
County of Tripoli

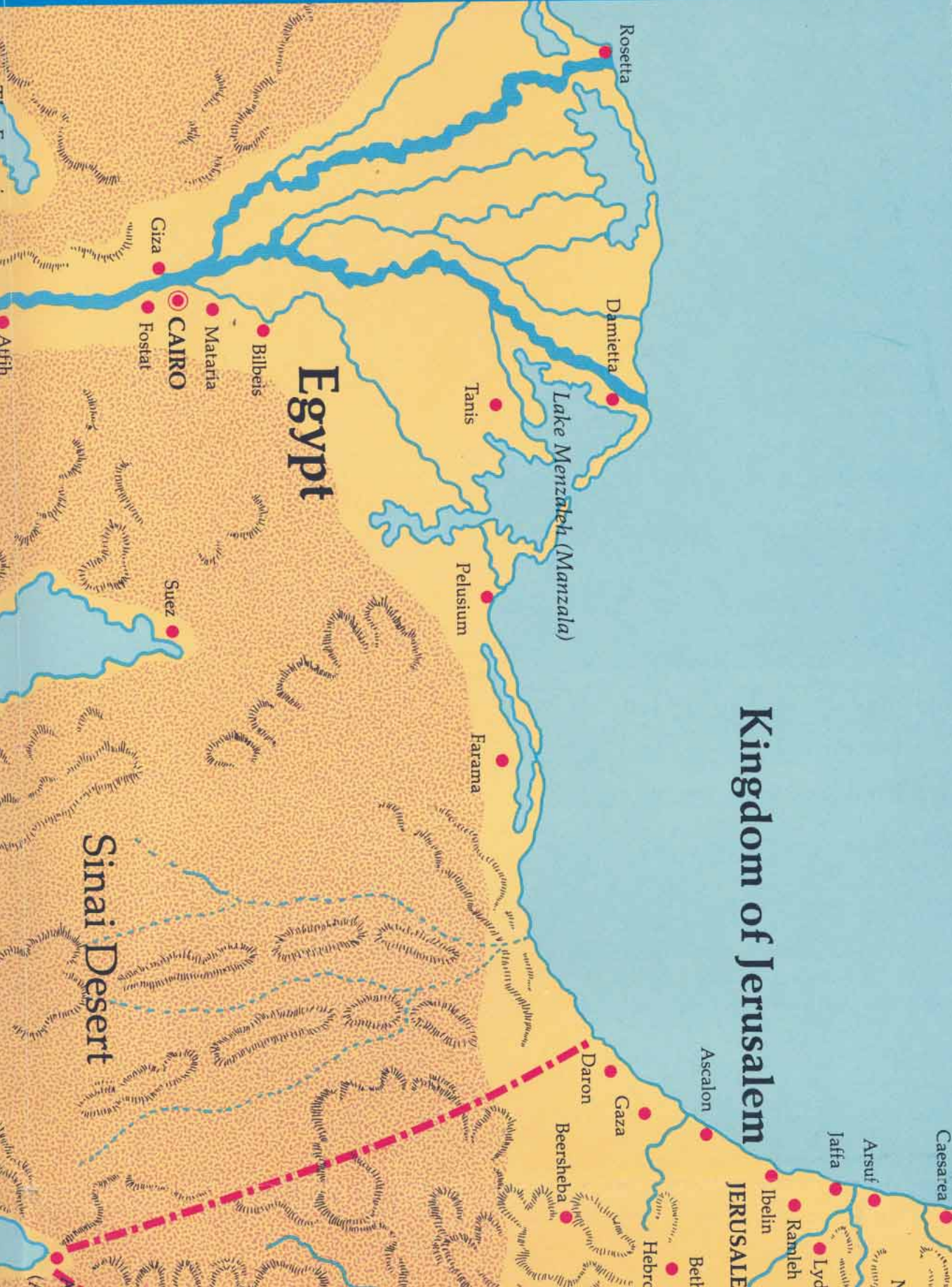


Mediterranean Sea









# Kingdom of Jerusalem

# Egypt

CAIRO

JERUSALEM

Sinai Desert

Rosetta

Damietta

Tanis

Lake Menzaleh (Manzala)

Pelusium

Farama

Daron

Gaza

Beersheba

Hebron

Bethel

Ascalon

Jaffa

Arsuf

Caesarea

Ramleh

Lyda

Ibelin

Giza

Fostat

Mataria

Bilbeis

Affih

N



# Kingdom of Jerusalem



Sinai Desert

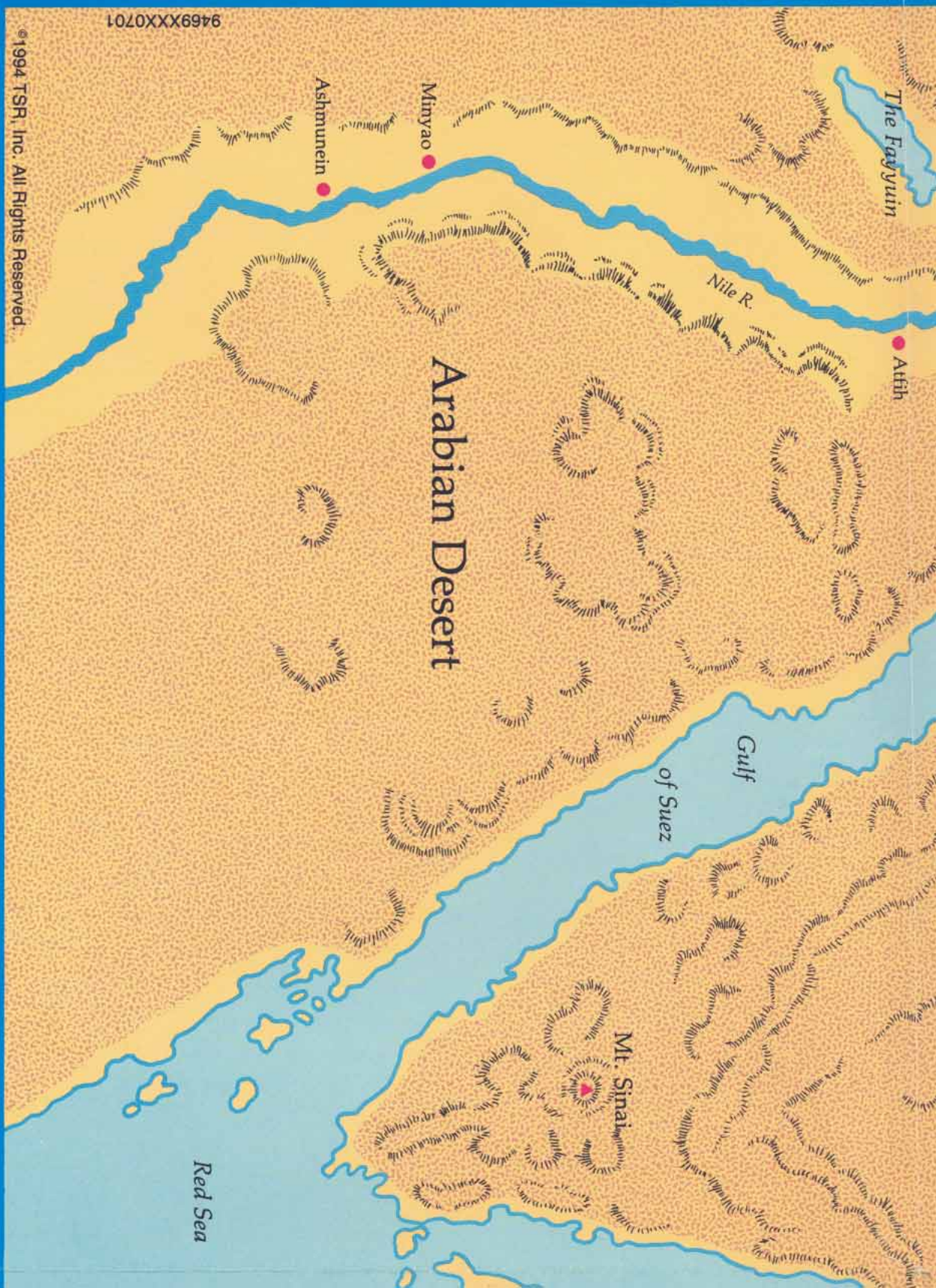
JERUSALEM

Transjordan

Outremer: The

During the





The Fayyūm

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Mt. Sinai

Red Sea

Arabian Desert

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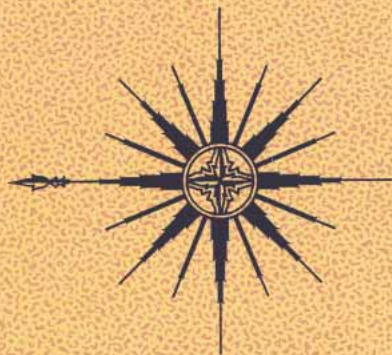
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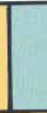

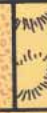



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# 12th Century A.D.

## Arabian Desert



Legend	
	Major City
	Town or Stronghold
	Ocean/Sea
	Desert
	Mountains
	Pass
	River
	Ford

1 inch equals 30 miles





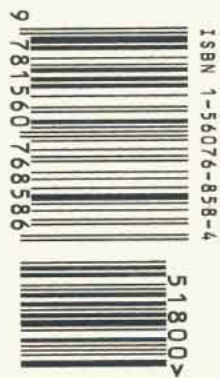
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