



DACQ
Dynasty Academic Competition
Questions

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Study Guide:
The Crusades

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The First Crusade (1096-1099):

Who: Led by Godfrey and Baldwin of Bouillon. Other important figures include Stephen, Count of Blois and Raymond IV of Toulouse. Opposed by Seljuk Kijid Arslan.

Why: Alexius I Comnenus, the Byzantine emperor, is imperiled and his capital of Constantinople threatened. Urban II calls for a crusade at the Council of Claremont. A huge response of over 150,000 zealous and variously trained and equipped Christians sweeps into the near east.

Result: Levant (the land that contains modern-day Israel, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan) and Anatolia (Turkey) were claimed in a decisive Crusader victory following sieges of Antioch and Jerusalem. Other Facts: Included the phases known as the Peasant's Crusade and the German Crusade (in which numerous Jewish strongholds and towns were attacked and pillaged). It was followed by the far less important Crusade of the Faint-Hearted. Most importantly, the Crusade Kingdoms were founded: Edessa, Antioch, Tripoli, Cilicia, and the Kingdom of Jerusalem. The Fatimid dynasty retained control of Egypt and the Byzantines held Cyprus.

The Second Crusade (1145-1149):

Who: First crusade led directly by European kings (Conrad III of Germany, Louis VII of France), who assisted Baldwin II of Jerusalem. Opposed by Muin Anar, Vizier of Damascus, who was supported by Nuradin.

Why: Edessa, the easternmost crusader state, had fallen out of Christian control and Baldwin II had actually been captured at the Battle of Harran. Against Byzantine emperor Manuel I Comnenus's objections, Pope Eugene III called for European forces to march through Anatolia and re-secure the Holy Land.

Result: The armies of Louis and Conrad were decimated after several ill-advised tactical and strategic decisions. After losing in the open field, the crusader army decided to attempt a siege of Damascus, which was extremely unsuccessful. The operation so weakened Christian military strength in the area that Arab forces would go on to retake Jerusalem and prompt the Third Crusade.

The Third (King's) Crusade (1189-1191):

Who: Richard the Lionhearted of England, Frederick Barbarossa of the Holy Roman Empire, and King Phillip II Augustus of France assisted Guy de Lusignan against the combined forces of Salah al-Din (Saladin).

Why: Saladin, originally emir of Egypt, had rallied the various feuding Arab factions and taken almost all of the Holy Land following a decisive victory at Hattin. Notably, the crusade was a result of growing national vs. papal authority, as royals (or in the case of Germany, the Diet) called for the action.

Result: The German force met with unparalleled disaster. Frederick Barbarossa, fresh from a series of monumental victories in Europe, drowned while attempting to swim a small river. Many historians have concluded that jumping in the water while wearing fifty pounds of armor was probably not Frederick's best tactical decision. His army reached the Holy Land with less than a thousand men. Richard conquered Cyprus and joined Phillip to siege Acre, Jerusalem's primary port. Despite winning a tactical victory at the Battle of Arsuf, Richard faced a strategically insurmountable campaign and

soon got into a conflict with other Europeans that led to his imprisonment by Duke Leopold. Ultimately, the crusade resulted in little more than a few extra years of security for the Crusader states.

The Fourth Crusade (1201-1204):

Who and why: Innocent III originally wanted a French crusade against Egypt (despite the fact that Egypt is pretty definitely not the Holy Land). Originally, Theobald III was set to lead, but accidentally stabbed himself in the hand and died of an infection. Things pretty much went downhill from there.

Result: Following the siege of Zara, Boniface of Montferrat was persuaded by Philip of Swabia, acting on behalf of the Holy Roman Empire, to shift the expedition to Constantinople in a bid to restore Isaac Angelus and Alexius Angelus to power over Alexius III. Upon arriving at Constantinople, the crusader army was rudely mocked by the citizens for engaging in such a poorly-planned coup. Irrked that those they were “liberating” kept violently assaulting them with garbage and facing extreme debt to Venetian merchants for shipping the army, the crusaders sacked the decidedly Christian Constantinople. It was not the holiest of crusades.

Some other prominent crusades:

The Albigensian Crusade 1209-1229):

Innocent III called this crusade as an effort to eradicate the heresy of the Cathars in Languedoc, France. Raymond VI of Toulouse was forced to conduct the pope's campaign after becoming enraged during a meeting with papal emissary Pierre de Castelnau that led to the latter's impalation with a lance. The crusade enabled Raymond to lift his excommunication. The expedition itself ended in an inquisition, as all great things do.

The Children's Crusade (1212):

Nicholas and Stephen, two teenage peasants, led thousands of young children and a small group of concerned parents to the Mediterranean, where they expected God to part the waters, ostensibly in order to better facilitate their slaughter by professional soldiers. The campaign ended without military action, as merchants promptly sold the children into slavery at a handsome 100% profit.

The Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Crusades (1248-1254):

The crusades themselves were not terribly significant, but are notable in that all involved King Louis IX of France (commonly called Saint Louis, as these crusades made him popular with Catholics). As for actual events, Louis was jailed by Muslim forces after the Eighth Crusade, and his few years wandering around the Holy Land upon his release, with some support from Edward I of England, constitute the “Ninth Crusade.”